

A Social History
of Scottish Working Class Education
1800 to 1872
with Particular Reference to Glasgow

by
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To
Mum and Dad
whose lifetimes were transformed
into labour time to the
detriment of their education

I hereby declare that this thesis to the best of
my knowledge has been composed by myself.

Signed



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ABBREVIATIONS

C. of C.	- Committee of Council.
G.S.S.U.	- Glasgow Sabbath School Union.
I.R.I.S.	- Report of Inspectors of Reformatory and Industrial Schools.
J.R.S.S.	- Journal of the Royal Statistical Society.
N.B.D.M.	- North British Daily Mail.
P.P.	- Parliamentary Papers. (N.B. Page number refers not to page number of volume but to article within volume.).
P.P.S.G.	- Proceedings of the Philosophical Society of Glasgow.
R.I.F.	- Report of Inspectors of Factories.
R.I.W.S.C.	- Report of Religious Institutions connected with Wellington Street Congregation.
S.C.	- Select Committee.
S.R.O.	- Scottish Record Office.
S.S.P.C.K.	- Society in Scotland for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge.
S.S.U.	- Sabbath School Union.
T.N.A.P.S.S.	- Transactions of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science.

Chapter I

Introduction: The Social Setting of Nineteenth Century Scottish Education

a) The Source

The changing social landscape and the economic changes that marked the birth of new classes came from a renewed social and economic state of society in the period 1780 - 1830. The industrial revolution exhibited three major changes; a renaissance in agriculture, an expansion and reformation of the population by migration and immigration, and finally provision of social overhead capital in the form of industrial concentration.

In 1690, and for half a century after that, Scotland showed in a peculiarly acute form all the evils of a traditional underdeveloped economy. She was as Professor Smout observes;

"...underdeveloped not only in the sense that all nations were before first industrial revolution took place in Britain at the end of the eighteenth century, but also in the sense that she was poorer and more backward even in her pre-industrial economy than the states to which she most frequently compared herself - England, to which she was linked by a common being, and Holland and France with which she had close cultural ties" ¹

Consequently the eighteenth century began in an atmosphere of gloom and despondency, in a trade depression, the shadow of famine, and the crushing news of the loss of the colony at Darien. With the achievement of the Union of Parliaments in 1707 new opportunities for a common

market for produce was expected, and when change did come it was sudden and violent. Slow and unspectacular though the process of change was at first, it accelerated in the 1760's carrying Scotland towards a far richer future.

In lowland agriculture, fields were enclosed, rigs broken, strips consolidated, crops and rotations changed and the old rights of common destroyed. The peasant subsistence economy slowly died. There arose instead a society of capitalist farmers and landless labourers working mainly for agricultural surpluses to feed the growing town population.

The nineteenth century farmer cut a vastly different figure from the eighteenth century tenant, who stood on its threshold. The peasant or 'gudeman' had lived from hand to mouth, now the farmer who replaced him was a capitalist of resources and a man of middle class affluence. Yet there was no stereotype in this pattern of change. Lothian farmers became better off early whereas Wigtownshire was slow to 'take off'. For every man lucky and enterprising, there was a multitude of humble farm-servants who remained humble. Thus most people who got their living from the land either were, or came to be simple wage earners, and as the year 1830 approached the greater the portion of the rural population that falls into this category.

This blend of enclosure and depopulation had a different formula in the highlands. Before the famous

Culloden skirmishes of 1746 highland society, while already changing in the direction of lowland norms, belonged to another cultural and economic milieu altogether. A society best described as tribal and inefficient. The great distinction between the highlands and the lowlands had been the existence of the clan. Nearly all the clan chiefs were landed proprietors and patriarchs whose tenants or tacksman held land in return for military favours. The pace of change here was undeniably sluggish; with money from rent being low, landlords preferred to have as many tenants on their land as they could crowd in, and there was no possibility of charging a higher rent as there was no external market for any surplus the highlands might produce.

The forces at work changing the highland society were both personal and social as well as economic. A decline in the arbitrary power of the once autocratic clan chiefs combined with elements of the money economy, was brought about;

"...by the increasing strength of the forces of law and order in the hills, and by the penetration into the highlands of some of the market forces that regulated the rest of Britain".²

Such movements changed traditional allegiances, although social factors like cattle stealing impeded economic penetration. A sprinkling of missionary schools carried the orthodox doctrines of the Church of Scotland into the glens, and the character of the landed classes

themselves began to change in favour of the new moral world and the elegant comforts of the lowland civilisation.

Changing economic circumstances in the rest of the country were transmitted to the north as a rising demand for highland products, especially cattle. After 1745 the prospects for fishing and kelp manufacture were enhanced. As would be expected a class of indigenous and wealthy capitalist farmers arose side by side with a class of landless labourers. However, for some time yet the highland economy was to be overwhelmingly dominated in parts by small tenants dividing and subdividing holdings. ³

Within two decades after the Culloden rebellion, economic conditions changed. The price of cattle rose by 300% between 1740 and 1790, turning effective terms of trade in the highlands' favour. Timber prices and also the price of wool began to rise, and from 1760 it was appreciated more and more that the highlands could become the new grazing territory for the cheviot and blackface sheep of the south of Scotland; a process that accelerated after the fall in cattle prices at the end of the Napoleonic wars.

As the origin of sheep farming was incompatible with peasant husbandry there was to be a basic social change in land tenure. Highland landowners like the lowlanders planned to rest the new husbandry of their

estates upon enclosures; runrig was abolished, the moors divided, and co-operative methods of husbandry superseded by advanced systems adopted to highland conditions. The limited initial success of the new crops and agrarian change in the north west, helped on by social pressures, depopulated the highlands of tacksmen. With a fall in the price of cattle and kelp after the Napoleonic wars only wool remained profitable, so in order to save the highlands from a return to subsistence economy, sheep farming became the rule. Gradually with the grim facts of economic geography, the highland clearances and the voluntary movement of population put maximum pressure upon the north and west coast, and the surplus population moved south, to swell the ranks of the reserve army of industrial labour.

Industrial innovation more than anything created the conditions for the existence of wage labour in Scotland. Traditionally, coal, iron and textiles form the backbone of industrial change, but by 1770 coal and iron were not yet vital factors, and manufacturing was undertaken but was primarily regarded as the by-product of agriculture.

Although the Scottish iron industry and its dependents did not experience a major revolution until the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century, the cotton industry was different. Cotton spinning mills, both new structures and conversions, appeared from the

1780's and the imports of cotton rose sharply: in 1778 over 200,000 lbs; in 1788 over 1,500,000 lbs. ⁴ The consequent expansion in the production of yarn increased the demand for hand-loom weavers until the process eventually became power driven. The peak of the cotton industry's prosperity was in 1825. From then on iron and heavy industries replaced cotton as the growth industry, especially with the patenting of Neilson's hot-blast furnace in 1828. The international success of the Carron Company, which was established in 1759 and appeared before the massive expansion of the industry, was the one notable exception.

The importance of the cotton industry lay in the new quality of life it introduced for many people. The first cotton mills of the 1780's were followed by large scale construction in Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire in the next decade. In the early nineteenth century when the rising use of steam power began to free the cotton mills from their complete dependence on the availability of ample supplies of water, and to encourage still further expansion of the coal industry, the construction of cotton mills became more concentrated near Glasgow, as the major importing centre for raw cotton. Hence resulted a new distribution of population. Radically new machine techniques and the application of the steam engine forged a life-long relationship between wage labour and capital that could not be thrown off overnight. A proletariat

emerged; a social order by virtue of its place in economic production and its urban characteristics, that was qualitatively different from anything that had gone before.

Yet textiles, coal and iron were not alone in transforming the Clyde basin; there was shipbuilding, railways, coachmaking, jewellery, miscellaneous manufactures in metals, wool, linen and jute, chemicals, sewed muslin, calico, printing and turkey-red dying earthen ware, india rubber and distilling. ⁵

Some of the big entrepreneurs who employed the new working class were household names. In chemicals, the Tennants of St. Rollox; in coalmining, Wm. Dixon of Govan; in iron smelting, the Bairds of Gartsherrie; in shipbuilding, Napier & Sons; in sewing machines, R.E. Simpson & Co. of Glasgow; in carpets, Messrs. Templeton & Co., Glasgow; in cotton, Messrs. A. & A. Galbraith, Oakbank and St. Rollox.

b) The New Population

Such large scale reorganisation of industry was bound to result in a major reshuffling of population. In fact population movements and immigration both formed and structured the diverse composition of the nineteenth century working class. Besides the formation of the working class and the resulting class structure that we are going to study, these movements were the source of changes affecting the development and style of nineteenth

century educational organisation. The population density, racial composition, age structure, town size, and the proportion of total population of school age, were the origins of problems that beset Scottish education and were not adequately coped with at least until the late 1860's.

The pundits, philanthropists and reformers saw the new society not statistically but in human terms. Town population and overcrowding became the source of the current evils of immorality, ignorance and prostitution. The teeming hoards of street children became the source of crime and delinquency. The rookeries and ghettos of untutored Irish became the source of Popery and Romish plots against the established order. Remedies included religion for the fallen, rescue for the young, and the reformatory for the delinquent.

As traditional allegiances with respect for order and rank had gone, what happened to the Scottish population between 1750 and 1850?

"The population of Scotland in 1707 was 1,048,000 and from this date until 1755, there was an average annual rise in the neighbourhood of 0.3%, 1755-1795 0.7%, 1795-1801 it rose to over 1%, the average annual rise during the eighteenth century was about 0.7%." 6

In 1755, Alexander Webster, minister of Edinburgh Tolbooth Church conducted the first census in Scotland. He co-operated with the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, who required from every minister within the bounds of those presbyteries where

they had erected charity schools, to make and transmit lists of parishioners, distinguishing Protestants and Papists. Webster's total was 1,265,380. In 1801 it grew to 1,608,000 and at each subsequent census until that of 1921, the population rose markedly, with females always outnumbering males.⁷ The greatest rate of increase occurred between the years 1811-1851, and only in 1881 did the rate of increase match up to its early nineteenth century record.

The lowered death rate had a large contribution to make to the national population rise (excess of births over deaths). Agricultural advances with much more variety in staple diet and the dissemination of medical inoculation against smallpox must have lowered the number of deaths. Only typhus and cholera increased in frequency in the first half of the nineteenth century. As a result of the rate of national increase in population, in some counties, there was a rising density per square mile of population.

The distribution of population according to age, area and occupation, had altered very greatly. The ages and occupations of the people were not taken at the earlier censuses (not systematically until 1841) but definite facts are known with regard to the topographical distribution of population, right back to the census of 1755. If we divide Scotland into three areas representing roughly highlands, lowlands and the narrow

central belt which lies between, ⁸ we get the distribution in 1755, 1861 and 1951 that appears in Appendix Table 1 (III).

It will be seen that in the middle of the eighteenth century, more than half of the population lived north of the central belt. By 1861, nearly 60% lived in the central belt and only 33% in the highlands, which constitutes more than 70% of the area of Scotland. More dramatic still is the fact that by 1861, 60% of the population was concentrated with a density of 414 persons to the square mile in the central belt which comprises one seventh of the area of Scotland.

Similar statistics outlining county increases in density, Appendix Table 1 (IV), give a closer picture of population growth. Overall, in 1755 Perthshire was the most populous county, with Aberdeenshire a close second, Midlothian third and Lanarkshire fourth. By 1801 with the resulting industrial concentration, the outline of which we sketched earlier, Lanarkshire led in the population stakes with 147,692 persons, a lead it continued to maintain. This was largely the result of the agglomeration of Glasgow and the concentration of the migrated population. Decreases in population due to internal migration were most observable from 1831 onwards, with Argyllshire, Bute, Dumfriesshire, Inverness, Perthshire and Sutherland showing notable reductions. Appendix Table 1 (V) of the rate of population increase

even more clearly illustrates the rate of growth of Lanarkshire for the first half of the century.

The internal migrants came principally from the highlands, a process encouraged by economic distress, and the attractions of city life. Their numbers were made up not only of the dispossessed but those from all ranks of society. Many made the tramp south before the clearance operations after 1745.⁹ After 1812, when there were regular steamboat services between Fort William and Glasgow, the ease of transferring to lowland parts became irresistible.

Inevitably there was a growth of towns and the phenomenal expansion of Glasgow. Scottish towns with a population of 10,000 and over held only 17% of the country's population in 1801, whereas in 1851 they held 32%. At the same time Glasgow's share rose from 5.1% to 11.5%. In fact, the process of agglomeration in Glasgow was more marked than London. In 1801, London had 10% of the population of England and Wales, Glasgow 5% of the Scottish population. By 1851 they were about equal until 1861 when Glasgow took the lead.

The statistical table Appendix 1 (VI) taken from the Census of 1831 vividly portrays the phenomenal developments in city size. In comparing great towns with each other, the metropolis is placed first followed by the Scottish capital. Next are those towns flourishing in manufacture - Manchester, Glasgow, and Paisley eminent

in cotton, Birmingham hardware trades, Leeds for woollens, Norwich for crops and Nottingham for stockings. After these are placed the commercial sea ports. Glasgow and suburbs (Govan and Gorbals) in 1801 had 77,385 souls, in 1811 - 100,749, in 1821 - 147,043 and by 1831 - 202,426; a 114% rise in 30 years. In 1831, it was second in the league table of size outside of the metropolis, expanding fastest in the ten years 1801 - 1811.

Before we comment upon the age and sex composition of the population as major influences upon education, something must be said of industrial migration and Irish immigration as they both add some colour to the population mix.

The industrial expansion of large towns meant that most of the population rise was due to immigration, a movement that was more intense in Scotland than in England. Another reason was that immigrants were just of the age most likely still further to raise population. In conjunction with this a two fold process of attraction of industry and repulsion of the agricultural population occurred. A high birth rate could be correlated with textile manufacture which employed vast quantities of children, lucrative to the employers and acting as a financial resource for the working class family. Later with the iron and coal industries went

the expansion of small communities from villages to industrial areas. The parish of Old Monkland in Lanarkshire showed no startling population rise for eighty years, growing from 1,813 souls in 1755 to 9,580 in 1831. By 1837 in a space of seven years, the population grew to 11,577 and finally in 1851 it was 27,333.

Seasonal migration, particularly to the Clyde Valley, was common as the new sheep farming entailed no expansion in the amount of labour, therefore highlanders whose movement was primarily dictated by want, migrated to the lowlands for harvesting and cancelled their once obligatory services to the laird. Others found work making roads, railways and canals, while women who went to Glasgow or Greenock into domestic service usually came home for the winter. Nearly all weavers worked in the fields during the harvest, resulting in the short distance migration of towns-people.

At the time of the first statistical account the Irish formed a fairly large element of the rural population in the south west counties of Ayr and Dumfries, Kirkcudbright and Wigtown, engaging in much disagreeable work for very low wages. They have been usually characterised by their strange migratory habits and their illiteracy and lack of education. This alone makes their place in educational statistics of nineteenth century quite important, and their influence on the

Scottish working class quite alarming.

In the eighteenth century industry was not the chief attraction for Irishmen. Their movement to the mills in Scottish towns coincided with the Irish Rebellion of 1798. Whereas the highlanders could not get from the Coast or Rosshire or from most of the islands for under 10/- and the journey took two or three days, when the early nineteenth century steamer crossing fares from Belfast to Glasgow were reduced to 4d., the Irish immigrant came over in droves, with a willingness to accept crowded conditions for the 12 to 24 hour trip.

Writing in 1834, George Cornwall Lewis estimated the Irish population in Lanarkshire did not exceed 50,000, in Edinburgh less than 10,000, in Dundee 500, and Aberdeen between 2,500 and 3,000.¹⁰ He believed that a large part of Ayrshire was Irish and probably at least two thirds of the population of Wigtownshire and a large part of that of Kirkcudbrightshire were Irish or of Irish extraction. The 1841 census is the first one to give the numbers, sex and percentage of Irish born inhabitants of the Scottish counties. According to it, the Irish in Scotland amounted to 126,000 or nearly 5% of the total population, the balance between sexes being about equal. Yet the census is concerned only with the Irish-born immigrants and takes no account of the Scottish-born children of such, except to enter them as Scots.

By 1840, immigration into the industrial areas had persisted long enough to establish a second and even

third generation among a race of manual workers who soon attained their maximum wages and married early. James Handley says that the offspring of these immigrants were of purely Irish blood, and the cleavage between the native-born and the immigrants was such that intermarriage was uncommon. ¹¹

Most of the Irish belonged to the poorest and almost the lowest class of society. A few raised themselves to the rank of respectable shopkeepers but the great bulk of the male population were handloom cotton weavers or labourers employed on day's wages on roads, canals, coal pits, draining, ditching, serving masons and coal porters. The female population were generally employed at the steamlooms or in the cotton factories. The educational condition of Glasgow was greatly affected by its Irish occupants, their numbers generally thronging the adventure schools in the Saltmarket and High Street. The only respite came after 1851, when Irish immigration was mainly to the New World.

From the point of view of education, the age and sex composition of this expanding army of proletarians is very important. In towns where there were no legal requirements to establish a parochial school, hordes of those children destined for employment in manufacturers roamed the streets. From the age composition of the

population can be deduced the potential desire for education, and it is important for no other reason than it put intolerable burdens upon church schools. Of course, we cannot say categorically that all those eligible were interested, but some correlation will later be made between school places and the entire population.

We will for argument's sake take the school age as between 5 and 15 years.¹² At the upper end of this scale to talk of a working class population between 10 and 15 years wanting education is somewhat illusory. Early entry into mills and factories (from 8 years upwards) prevented the population from even seeing education as a right. Certainly the parents exploited the children in the sense that their income was needed to keep some families at subsistence level. Nevertheless the magnitude of the problem can only be adequately assessed if we refrain from the Victorian view of children as small adults, and keep to the modern concept of the child in need of education at least until 15 years of age. Besides, as industry developed in the third quarter of the nineteenth century the employers and teachers were certainly convinced that a proletariat of 13 plus who could not read and write was ineffectual.

From the statistics there is no way of telling what proportion of children were working class, but at this stage we can quite literally take 80% as a rough indicator.¹³ Once more Lanarkshire is used as the reference point of study.

Appendix Table 1 (VII) illustrates by means of histograms the relative magnitude of the population 0 - 15 years in England and Wales, Scotland and Lanarkshire. Beginning at 1841 when the census breakdown of ages was first published, some 37% of males in England and Wales, 39% in Scotland, and 37.5% in Lanarkshire were between the ages of 0 and 15 years. The corresponding values for females was somewhat lower at 35%, 34% and 35%. Therefore, one in three of the population were what we might call children. There was very little change over a thirty year period 1841 to 1871. Although Lanarkshire was more industrialised than Scotland as a whole, surprisingly there was little difference in the figures, On the face of it one would have assumed that large families of working class households predominated in industrial areas, but only in the 1860's and 1870's was the percentage of young males and females in the Lanarkshire population increasing to overtake the overall Scottish mean.

In summary it is easy to deduce that an increase in absolute size occurred in the child population between the crucial years 1841 to 1871, but the percentage of children in the total population remained relatively constant. What voluntary educational bodies had to do was to cope with a consistently expanding child population as its own adult population grew.

c) The New Classes

So far nothing concrete has been said about the

working class whose youthful education we hope to define. It is too easy to talk about them glibly as though they constituted a homogeneous entity. Nothing could be further from the truth. As great a gap existed between the artisan/mechanic and the labourer as existed between the working class and the rich. Labourers were an inferior class in the eyes of artisans. In the eyes alike of unionists and non-unionists any labourer who showed a desire to get out of his place by attempting to pick up or creep into "the trade" to which he was attached as an unskilled assistant, was guilty of a deadly sin and deserved the abhorrence of right thinking members of the craft. ¹⁴ For the hewer of wood and the drawer of water, the Working Man says, ¹⁵ "The artisan class ... would scarcely count him a brother and certainly not an equal".

Loosely defined the working class was not a class but classes, and the working man a many-specified genus of skills, trades and characteristic types. There was the educated and the non-educated, the political and the non-political, the trade unionist and the non-trade unionist, sober, drunken, thrifty, non-thrifty, employed and unemployed. The characteristics of the educated and uneducated section needs greater elaboration.

Thomas Wright, the journeyman engineer, a prolific writer on character and morals defined several groupings. ¹⁶ Wright's groupings are adequate as they show the Victorian sentiments of individualism and self help as being quite

strong among the labour aristocracy. He produces three educational divisions and three schools of men. The educational division is comprised of the educated working man, the intelligent artisan of the popular phrase and emotion and the lower or dangerous classes.

The educated working man, he contends, is a large and rising division making up in moral weight for its comparative want of numbers; he is the stock 'intelligent artisan', improved and tempered by education, by accident or taste; he has continued the work of education beyond the schoolhouse. From this point commences a divergence between the artisan who is intelligent in education as well as the natural meaning of the word, and an artisan who is intelligent in the latter sense only. The educated working man believes then that if education finishes with school alone, the result is that 'men become men in years while still children in the matter of education'.

The educated working man with his early taste for reading has the greatest contempt for the uneducated of his class. As uninformedness is a characteristic of a large proportion of the uneducated section and extending to such simple every day matters, that for educated men brought into contact with it, it becomes irritating and therefore seemed contemptible. Once brought in contact with the uninformed, the educated working man was considered by his mates to be a bit of a prig or likely

to 'come the grand' over them. This is one of the greatest drawbacks the auto-didact had to face.

Thomas Wright's second division, the intelligent artisan, is less satisfactorily defined. He has the quality of shrewdness, a mixture of sound common sense, and political awareness. He is upright in dealing with fellow men, sober, industrious, prudent, displaying little selfishness as he fights on behalf of his class. His fault is reputed to lie in his want of education. Finally at the bottom are the unschooled, the poor, drunk or violent or those totally without education.

Now let us look at three different types of working man, Wright's three schools of educated men. The 'old school' previously made up of older workers generally have a lack of education. They believe in the three R's but make no attempt to go beyond them, seeing advance as affectation and desire to be above their class. They generally read criminal records and working class newspapers, they believe in soiling hands, dressing and living plainly. Next come the 'school of the day' the younger worker with new ideas setting a high value on education and politics. Finally there are the 'rising school' who have reaped the benefits of advances in social and educational legislation. Being tolerably well educated, they believe wholeheartedly in self improvement.

While illustrating the point that the working class is not entirely an homogeneous entity, there are a number

of pitfalls in taking impressions as a satisfactory analysis of subdivisions. Undoubtedly these types existed then, and do so today, but writers from the working class writing about their own kind generally suffered from one defect - social mobility and Smilesian industry had blinded their eyes to levels of social consciousness bounded by rigorous social divisions within the proletariat, and tempered also by separate educational arrangements.

We will meet all these social types later on but in preparation, an analysis is needed to define groups whose social class possibly determined their social consciousness, who by being part of a separate group at some time in their lives were entitled to measured and prescribed amounts of education. For example the aristocracy of labour had the aristocracy of intellect; the artisans' children monopolised the Scottish sessional schools. The labourers had at best the poor adventuring or Sabbath Schools, at worst the ragged schools to be shared with the social outcasts. The unfortunate defaulter was turned over to the prison, the workhouse or the industrial school. His comrade in mills or factories was content with what the educational provision of the Factory Acts could provide.

d) Educationally Separate Class Groupings

In a sense, the upper class is synonymous with the bourgeoisie, the working class with the proletariat. These clear cut distinctions were new to the Victorians.

In the various statutes concerning labour from the fourteenth century, we find a diversity of terms denoting the worker - hired man, hired person, industrious persons and by way of designating certain groups more specifically - servants, workmen, labourers; the tendency was to use the term labourers to cover them all.

Since the sixteenth century, the terms poor labourers and the poor have been used interchangeably by writers, being in themselves regarded as synonymous. Gradually 'the poor' comes to be used as a noun, synonymous with labourers, having lost its adjectival character. Out of this usage there develops another very common practice. By way of distinguishing those of the poor who are not able to work from those who are, writers refer to the former as 'the very poor' or in speaking of the latter they precede the word 'poor' with a qualifying adjective e.g. the labouring poor. In the early part of the eighteenth century, there were other expressions in equally common use - 'the poor labourer', 'the working poor', 'the industrious poor', 'the labouring poor'; but after 1770, 'the labouring poor' was the one most frequently used.

The term 'labouring poor' marks the threshold of the capitalist era. David Ricardo in his discussions of the subject of wages refers to 'the poor' when he clearly means the workers.¹⁷ James MacCulloch in his Principals of Political Economy refers to the 'labouring

poor' and refers to the workers as the 'poor'. J.S. Mill however, speaks of 'the labouring poor', 'the labouring classes', 'the operative classes', 'the working class', the 'labourers'.¹⁸ Professor Asa Briggs notes that the word 'class' makes its first appearance about the year 1818.¹⁹

The significant fact is that since the industrial revolution, wage labour has undergone a change in more than one direction, the term 'labouring poor' has fallen into disuse being replaced by 'workers', 'wage earners' and finally 'proletariate'. Only in the precapitalistic period, when wage labour was far from being the universal or even the predominant form taken by labour was the term worker avoided - although the form of wage of domestic outworkers was that of a price for commodities sold (e.g. pieces of cloth) rather than labour power sold.²⁰

A proletarian or wage earner then is a legally free, an economically self determined person who for a price determined by market conditions converts his labour power - physical or mental - into services performed to another's command. Wage earners have no career. Education for careers is a fiction. He is without property and his wages are only sufficient to meet subsistence. The proletariate have existed in all ages but not in such great numbers as in the nineteenth century. As all workers are not equal to proletarians

(that is some have wages that allow them to accumulate education beside goods) the term 'proletariate' will not define all of the working class, only the most dispossessed.

It was the growth of wage labour and the creation of a large class of industrial wage earners in nineteenth century Scotland that was largely new, although industrial workers were not in themselves a new phenomenon. One only needs to recall the seventeenth century Scottish colliers and salters who were degraded into serfdom, or the masons, carters, and the general labourers who worked for wages in the burghs in the late medieval and early modern period, to see that Scotland for centuries had had some kind of industrial work force.

"What was unprecedented about the situation at the end of the eighteenth century was the speed with which the work force was being added to".²¹

There was an explosive increase in the number of jobs available especially for women and adolescents and it is worth pausing to stress the enormous number of people involved throughout the lowlands of Scotland in the manufacture of cotton in all its branches.

Professor Smout referring to the work of the statistician James Cleland notes that 30% of the Glasgow labour force were engaged in textile manufactures alone.²²

While James Cleland speaks of the 'hawkers dealers in small wares, furniture brokers and dealers in old clothes', Karl Marx speaks of the lumpen

proletariate - the vagabonds, criminals and prostitutes as belonging to the relatively surplus population. They form the reservoir of the fallen - a skid row - readily replenished and soon overstocked.

Henry Mayhew whose sociological investigations in the metropolis completes our understanding of this group divides them into sectors;²³ - those that Will Work, those who Cannot Work and those that Will Not Work, the street folk or wandering tribes who occupied the lower echelons of society. Some were born into this class, more often through ill luck, unemployment or cyclical poverty (a recurring condition of working class families), a majority of the working class at some period or other came within the orbit of the surplus population. Its history is underrated and neglected by educational historians. Quite naturally its prize was the ragged school. Usually located in a notorious rookery and under the eyes of government supervision it came to light in the workhouse school, the industrial school for orphans or pauper schools²⁴ set up especially in England under the tutelage of J.K. Shuttleworth chairman of the Privy Council for Education.²⁵ If crime was resorted to, its members received more than their fair share of attention by reformers, who correlated the beneficial effects of education with the falling crime rate. Those workers not in the lumpen proletariat and not proletarians were slow to evolve.

The need of industry during the first decade of its development to satisfy its hunger for labour material meant that the first generation of the industrial labour force consisted of workers drawn from old established trades, consequently their numbers were relatively small. Large families of the proletariat gradually became the rule rather than the exception where demand-induced industrial wage inflation took a hold.²⁶ This coincided with acute educational deprivation for working class children where the quantity of school places per capita was low, and industrial pressure meant take up was low also, while makeshift education arrangements fulfilled the role of industrial discipline and effective control over labour. The employers' interest in education during this period was on the one hand the training of new skills and literacy, on the other a disciplined labour force brought to heel by the stick or carrot, or a new ethos of work order and obedience.

Only after the 1840's do we get the formation of a labour aristocracy with education tailored to other than immediate industrial needs. This class is interesting if only for the reason that it held a monopoly in the education that was available, and can generally be considered as the most literate, although we must guard against hasty generalisations. Many of their number joined the new model unions constituted after 1850.²⁷

They were better paid, better treated, and generally regarded as more 'respectable' and politically moderate than the mass of the proletariat. If the first phase of industrial capitalism was the period 1780-1840 they are the children of the second phase, the 1840's-90's which saw capitalism's supreme rule.

The criteria of membership to this group was a) level and regularity of earnings, b) prospects of social security, c) conditions of work, d) relationships with strata above and below them, e) conditions of living, f) education and prospects for their children. As earnings are most important, the best paid strata of the working class merged with what may loosely be called the lower middle class - small shopkeepers, some industrial masters, foreman and managers; towards the end of the nineteenth century it would also mean clerks and their like. Between the labourers and the labouring aristocracy, there lived workers who belonged to neither group but shaded into each, better off labourers, skilled workers and suchlike. There is no clear line dividing the labouring aristocracy from these.

Throughout this thesis the term working class and proletariat will be used interchangeably, except where reference is made specifically to the labour aristocracy. Both terms define a class related to its position in economic production and whose life time was given over

principally to labour time. Various occupational groups are included like small shopkeepers, the skilled worker, the semi and unskilled worker. Employed and unemployed groups, the poor and lumpen proletariat, simply define the condition of the class during one historical period, or one period in their own lifetime.

Even if the working classes in the nineteenth century were differently distributed in different areas they were common to both England and Scotland. What was different was their relative magnitude in the local population and the magnitude of the educational problems they presented.

Chapter II

The Magnitude of the Educational Problems in Scotland

After some fifty years of nineteenth century educational progress, it was not without some foundation to equate class position with educational attainment in youth - they were somewhat synonymous; "Middle class boys are boys whose general education ends between their fourteenth and nineteenth years" ¹ Nevertheless, the provision for working class education in Scotland is complicated by the fact that Scotland had a national system of education long before popular education became an ideal in England.

The intervention of the State in Scottish education goes back to James IV. In 1496, his Parliament issued an act, ² an administrative measure elicited by the need to have the local government of the realm in good hands, empowering the barons and freeholders to put their eldest sons to school. Being one of the earliest educational acts in the history of Europe, it instituted the idea of compulsion, even if the threats were not carried out.

The effect of the Reformation in 1560 on education was strong. The Protestant church, established in 1560, had risen on a wave of criticism and abuse in the Roman Catholic system. Having knocked down the old, it had to build anew and the church that John Knox and the Reformers created was to determine the character of Scotland for centuries.

Their first task was to settle the character in which the new Church would be governed. The completed scheme was laid before the General Assembly of the Church in the form of the Book of Discipline. Printed as an appendix to Knox's history of the Reformation in Scotland, it contained two 'heads' or chapters, Of Schools and Universities. For the preservation of religion, Knox envisaged schools to be universally erected in all cities and chief towns. These were held to be necessary to consolidate the reformed faith. A system was consequently set up based on the parish as an administrative unit with strict supervision and accountability. Unfortunately, the scheme was rejected by Parliament on 15th January, 1561, never adopted by the Privy Council and never passed into the law of Scotland. What is more, the lairds were not even prepared to put up money for Knox's plans.

The scheme's influence is not easy to trace, as it never came into operation and was not even widely published, and its proposals were slow to voluntarily come into effect. The system of parish schools was hardly visible, but its importance is simply that the Book of Discipline contains many of the notions of which Scottish education is traditionally proud.

In the first place it projected a system as wide as a nation. Besides which, the framers saw education as the right of all children, with bursaries for the

maintenance of the clever poor. The legacy of the idea placed continual stress on the moral and spiritual culture of the child, a sentiment widely canvassed during the evangelical revival in nineteenth century education. Lastly, the framers of the Book showed the highest appreciation of compulsory education, a proposal that was only achieved after tortuous ideological battles three hundred years later.

Several pieces of educational legislation were passed in 1616 and 1633, and the 'Glorious Revolution' and the accession of William and Mary heralded another effort at State intervention in education. It would be wrong as J.C. Jessop has implied to accept that "...the Acts of 1616, 1633 and 1646, throughout Scotland ... had failed to operate"³ A distinction has always to be made between the English speaking, settled lowlands and the Celtic speaking, turbulent, untamed highlands - a distinction that must be emphasised in all arguments about education, at least up until the early nineteen hundreds. By 1600 many burghs were provided with schools maintained by the joint partnership of kirk sessions and town councils. "These schools were far from ineffective and educated a sizeable proportion of the nation's children"⁴

The first legislation calling for a school in every parish, supported by contributions from the heritors was an act of the Privy Council in 1616. However, the

parochial schools existed before that; in 1611 of twenty three rural parishes in the diocese of St. Andrews, thirteen had public schools.⁵ The act of 1616 had some effect, for in Aberdeenshire of ten parishes unprovided in 1611, at least two had acquired schools by 1630.⁶ In 1633, Parliament in ratifying the act of 1616, gave each bishop power to "stent every plough" i.e. assess heritors for school maintenance, consequently many schools were established between 1633 and 1696. In Fife, out of forty five rural parishes, thirty three had schools; in one shire only four of the forty five rural parishes were without a school in 1660.⁷

Notwithstanding these developments, in 1696 the Act of Settling Schools became the legislative charter of the parish school. It enacted that;

"...there be a school settled and established and a schoolmaster appointed in every parish not already provided by the advice of the heritors and ministers of the parish"⁸

and was the germ of the Scottish educational ideal of a school open to all, with a secondary curriculum for those needing it. The laird's son was to sit with the labourer's, thereby enhancing social intercourse.

The school was to be housed commodiously and the teacher's salary was fixed at a minimum of 100 and 200 merks a year (in sterling £5.11s.1d. - £11.2s.3d.) The heritors were obliged to pay this salary, but they might recover half the 'stent' from their tenants. Should they prove lax, the local presbytery could ask the

Commissioners of Supply for the shire to compel the heritors to meet their obligations. As the heritors most frequently met at that time on the local kirk session, they tended to work through that body, thereby strengthening the bonds between religion and education.

It is significant that new acts were constantly passed, despite explicit orders in earlier ones, and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that in many parts of the country before 1696, the people's belief in the value of education did not extend to paying for a system of schools. No act gave any real power to presbyteries to coerce unwilling heritors. In the seventeenth century, even the Commissioners of Supply could not plant schools and as late as 1803, there was an outcry against a new act because it forced landowners to build 'palaces for dominies'.

Although education was not free, it was supported by a tax on heritors in country districts and out of municipal funds in burghs, meaning that it could be cheap, and children could receive at least elementary education for a trifling sum. The invoking of a law to set up a school and to ensure the continuous payment of a master's salary, was reckoned to be Scotland's great advantage over England. Combined with this, another important benefit of the 1696 act was the love of learning instilled among all classes of the population, a relative absence of social tension due to the easy mixing of all classes and no doubt the creation of a literate working class.⁹

Throughout the eighteenth century, constant shifts in

population, the meagre payment to schoolmasters, the size of parishes and the reluctance of heritors who were to be assessed to be responsible for assessing, left a patchwork of parochial school arrangements throughout Scotland. Well on into the nineteenth century and especially during educational controversies, myths about the extent of parish school provision became defences for the status quo. The social ladder for the 'lad o' pairts' to go from the gutter to 'wag his pow' in the pulpit had little foundation in fact.

The existence of adventure schools in parishes certainly delayed the provision of a parish school. But presbyteries and kirk sessions up to 1742 were meticulous in their care for the education of poor scholars, paying for their school wages and buying books for them.¹⁰ On the other hand, low remuneration and long delays in paying masters resulted in short-period stays. The problems of keeping a master in a small parish was large, as the increase in the number of poor scholars meant master's fees dropped drastically. Although many schoolmasters were graduates, there was little or no attempt to offer more than the ordinary branches of learning. Because of the difficulty in securing satisfactory schoolmasters, the church had long sought to encourage youths to study for the ministry and to serve time as masters. While scholarships were available for boys of 'good ingine' with their hopes fixed on the ministry, heritors and kirk sessions were often content

with scanty educational arrangements, and schoolmasters often became involved in scandals of drunkenness and immorality.

Pupils did not start their schooling at the same time, they drifted in and out as they pleased, sometimes because they could not pay fees, sometimes because the female pupil who had learned to read had to yield her place to a younger brother. Poor scholars on the roll had to be allowed their legal three hours out of school in order to beg for bread, and they were often removed early by kirk sessions so that brothers and sisters could take their place. For most poor scholars, tuition consisted of little more than instruction in reading and yet the system was not without its contradictions; for although a great number of parishioners did not attend school, some poor boys went on to universities.

The ease with which conjoined parishes interpreted the act of 1696 in generous and not so generous terms did little to enhance uniformity

"... parish of Libberton and Quathquay, the nine heritors contributed not a farthing to the relief of the poor, the burden of supporting these and aiding education fell upon farmers" ¹¹

Where there was a large number of schoolmasters as in Crawford and Leadhills parish Lanarkshire, the mining company ceased to support a school and the burden of teaching fell upon shepherds and miners. ¹²

In all fairness, if anything was lacking in education it was due to the observed differences between the highland and lowland regions. The educational experience of the

rural lowlands was very different from that of the rural highlands, and the experience of the towns was different from both.

As we have stated, the aim of education to get one school in every lowland parish properly financed by a tax on heritors, and properly subject to the disciplinary inspections of the kirk, had already been achieved over wide areas before 1696. By the time the First Statistical Account was published in the 1790's, all gaps had been filled, if only by adventure schools. One school had been set up by statutes in every lowland country parish.¹³

Between them, the parochial schools and the adventure schools of the lowlands were able to maintain a rural society in which almost everyone seems to have been able to read and write from at least as early as the mid eighteenth century, despite all the subsequent social demographic and economic changes;

"...a remarkable achievement, certainly not paralleled in England and probably paralleled in very few societies anywhere in the world, except for Prussia, parts of Switzerland and a few Puritan areas in the United States".¹⁴

"...what was actually achieved by these schools was the construction of a literate peasant society in the Scottish Lowlands that was not merely able to read but apparently loved reading."¹⁵

For geographical and historical reasons, the parish system operated beyond the highland line under enormous obstacles that had no counterpart in the lowlands. The

prevalence of the Gaelic language, the immense size of parishes, and the fact that the highlands had not long been under the authority of the state, meant few highlanders saw the point of attending school. Nevertheless, the Church of Scotland and the heritors did make considerable efforts to meet their responsibilities. By the middle of the eighteenth century, less than one fifth of highland parishes were without some kind of school and fifty years later virtually all the parishes had such a school. 16

"There can be little doubt that only a limited number of parishes were without public schools in 1758, and that fewer still had no means of education at all". 17

At the turn of the century in 1709, the highlands became the main object of charity for the S.S.P.C.K. (Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge) and after the 'Forty Five', the value of education in pacifying highlanders seems to have become more generally recognised.

All in all, the Scottish education system had shown comparative adequacy until the onset of growth in industrial towns. What happened in the nineteenth century?

The first education act for one hundred years was the Parochial Schoolmasters (Scotland) Act, passed in 1803. It dealt with increase in teachers' salaries to match the cost of living, and empowered heritors to free another teacher for what became known as a side school.

It was a meagre response to the major economic and social changes of the times.

The legacy of the past bequeathed on the one hand a rudimentary national framework conceived on rural lines and inoperative in the industrial cities; on the other hand, a belief predominated in the sanctity of parish school education that attained mythological proportions. Now the growth of the working class was to result in a new superstructure of educational arrangements, in most cases outside parochial control, in which the similarity with English popular education defied the separate title of a Scottish tradition in education.

What quantitative evidence is there for such a judgement? Undoubtedly the French Revolution, post-war unemployment, the Scottish insurrection of 1820 and the Reform Bill agitation resulting in the Reform Bill of 1832, had thrown a cloak of anxiety over the rich contentment of Scottish bourgeois affluence. George Lewis, editor of the Scottish Guardian was prompted to reply in 1834;¹⁸

"The education of youth is the first step in the commencement of all good governments and every child born in this country has a claim to be educated were it for no higher object than the plain and rational one of reading and understanding the laws which he is called to obey"

Then he went on to cast doubts upon the capability of the Scottish education system to cope with industrialisation.

This was the beginning of a period of increased controversy. What was not new, or seldom called upon in

support of such judgements, was the statistical evidence that had been readily supplied in the Digest of Lord Brougham's Committee in 1819.¹⁹ Lewis asked what proportion ought to be at school to secure universal juvenile instruction - "...every child between 6 and 14 ought to be at school"²⁰ In Glasgow, that meant from 30,000 to 40,000 scholars, one fifth to one sixth of the population, allowing obviously for sickness and the education of the middle classes at home. Taking the sum of all educational work done by Parliament, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, or by private benefactors, he estimated there were still only 50,000 children at school out of above half a million, one tenth instead of one fifth; "...in that of national education, there has been a ruinous economy - an economy pernicious alike to the mind and morals of Scotland"²¹

For George Lewis's pessimism, it is easy to counterpose the optimism of conservatives, who declared that the 'schoolmaster was abroad' and ample provision already existed for the working classes, particularly at a time when Parliamentary statistics were shuttlecocks to press for educational legislation. Conservatives remained apathetic until parish schools were attacked, - the ideal of national and non-sectarian education was put forward by the liberals. No doubt behind school estimates there lurked political motives. Conservatives saw social troubles as the by-product of education, while liberals blamed it upon the lack of such.

In Lewis's work and similar controversies, the educational debate was primarily concerned with the amount of education, not the quality. Although it cannot be taken for granted that education is synonymous with schooling, or that we can measure the educational provision of the past by merely recording the numbers of schools and scholars, a statistical baseline needs to be established to separate fiction from reality.

The arbitrary figure of one fifth to one sixth of the total population that Lewis relies upon was in no way universal. The 1851 census compiled by Horace Mann uses as its datum, one eighth of the population.²² Working out the proportion of scholars to the total population was a favourite for the Victorians, like their attachment to the statistical average. Little attention was paid to the concept of those eligible i.e., those children between 5 and 15 years.

However inadequate the census material and Parliamentary returns, they provide useful data with which to attempt a broad view of the effects of industrialisation on Scotland,²³ because at their most optimistic, they present the alternatives in education that were offered to the people. Analogous to the distribution of wealth, they measure the distribution of life-chances. At their worst, they conceal the political/social motives for establishing different types of school.

a) Educational Statistics And The 1851 Census

The census of education for England and religious

education and worship for Scotland, undertaken under the authority of Horace Mann in 1851,²⁴ was the most comprehensive work of its kind on education undertaken in the first half of the nineteenth century. In conjunction with the decennial census of 1851, which for the first time registered scholars in its household schedule, the number of schools, evening schools for adults, literary and scientific institutions, Sunday Schools and information as to teachers and subjects, was computed.

The total number of scholars in day schools, respecting which information had been forwarded, was 368,517. As a proportion to the population of Scotland (2,888,742) it amounts to 12.76% or one scholar to every 7.84 inhabitants. England and Wales had 1 scholar to every 8.36 inhabitants - Scotland's figure was a little better at one to 7.84, but not good enough to warrant the compliment that Scottish education was superior.

Making a fair allowance for deficient returns, it seems probable that about 14%, or 1 in 7 of the people of Scotland were at school. The source of information was not entirely satisfactory as the number in answer to the question as to occupation on the householders' schedule of the decennial census, was returned as 426,566 scholars. The second figure is somewhat optimistic. To get a clear picture of what the 1 in 7 figure represents and the rate of educational progress, we must compare it with previous government estimates.

In England the earliest statistics by which progress may be measured are contained in the parliamentary returns of 1818. "These though defective, are sufficiently complete to show that a considerable step had then been taken towards a general instruction of the people" ²⁵ Fifteen years later there are Lord Kerry's parliamentary returns of 1833 ²⁶ A combined table for England and Wales records the following;

TABLE A - ENGLAND & WALES 27

Periods	Population at each	Number of scholars at each period belonging to the schools.		Proportion of scholars to population at each period			
		Day Schools	Sunday Schools	Day Schools		Sunday Schools	
				One in	%	One in	%
1818	11,642,683	674,883	477,225	17.25	5.8%	24.40	4.09%
1833	14,386,415	1,276,947	1,548,890	11.27	8.9%	9.28	10.78%
1851	17,927,609	2,144,378	2,407,642	8.36	11.6%	7.45	13.4%

This suffices to prove a great increase of educational provision subsequent to 1818. The English population between 1818 and 1833 had increased by nearly 24%, while during the same interval, the number of day scholars had risen by 89% and that of Sunday Schools by 225%. The number of Sunday Schools is largely an indication of the appeal the church schools had for the poor sections of the working class in large cities.

We would expect Scotland with its firmly established statutory education system to exhibit the same or more optimistic tendencies. Similar returns to those of England can be furnished; the 1819 Digest of Parochial Returns²⁸ and the survey of educational returns for Scotland 1833-34.²⁹ Unfortunately, there are no separate returns for Sunday Schools for the 1830's.

A comparison of tables A and B shows some startling results.

TABLE B - SCOTLAND

Periods	Population at each	Number of Scholars Belonging to Schools		Proportion of Scholars to Population at each period			
		Day Schools	Sunday Schools	Day Schools		Sunday Schools	
				One in	%	One in	%
1818	2,092,014	176,525	53,449	11.9	8.4%	39.1	2.5%
³⁰ 1834	2,452,000	236,325	63,032	10.4	9.62%	39.0	2.56%
1851	2,888,742	368,517	292,549	7.84	12.76%	9.9	10.1%

In 1818 Scotland's predominance in education is firmly established with one in 11.9 (8.4%) of the total population attending school against England's 1 in 17.25 (5.8%). By 1834, with the upsurge in educational enterprise, the gap is reduced to 1 in 10.4 (9.62%) for Scotland and 1 in 11.27 (8.9%) for England. By mid century, Scotland is just ahead with 12.76% of the population at school, compared with England's 11.6%.

The point must be emphasised that these returns are for children 'on the books'. If actual attendance returns were used, the picture would be more depressing with 1 in 9.3 of the population at day school. There is, however, a balancing factor.

During the thirty three year period, England has had a noticeably greater proportion of scholars, mostly working class, at Sunday Schools. Despite the underestimate in the 1834 figure for Scotland, there is a jump between 1834 and 1851 in the number of scholars attending Sunday Schools from 1 in 39 of the population (2.56%) to 1 in 9.9 (10.1%). It may be argued that the consistently high Sunday School attendance in England is to be accounted for by the failure of a satisfactory scheme of popular education. The Scottish antipathy to Sunday Schools was no doubt due to the reluctance of the Established Church until 1841 to accept non-church control of Sunday education.³¹

There are two major criticisms of these statistics. Firstly they are over optimistic in their estimates, as they

register not actual attendance, but those belonging to schools. Seasonal employment was most likely to affect working class boys and girls to the detriment of their education. Furthermore, taking day school attendance as a percentage of the total population leaves out considerations of those who were eligible between 5 and 15 years but were restricted by circumstance or choice from a decent education.

Both G. Lewis and H. Mann make unsound value judgements as to the proportion of the population who should be at school. Lewis's figure of one fifth to one sixth of the total population as desirable for school attendance is an under-estimation. Something approaching one quarter of the total population would have to be at school to allow for full attendance between 6 and 14 years. Similarly, Horace Mann writing with the full weight of the arguments of Edmund Baines³² and James Kay Shuttleworth³³, maintains that one sixth of total population is needed at school to allow the children of the labouring classes a period of four or five years schooling between their fifth and fifteenth years.³⁴

To arrive at this figure, he makes a number of subtractions from the total child population of 5-15 years prevented by other causes than their age from attending. A deduction is made for those at work and in their own homes, those educated at home - usually the middle class - and those seriously ill. The deduction of the employed child forms the largest number.³⁵

"Probably it will not be too much to deduct from the numbers between 3 and 15 as many as 1,000,000 children who, from occupations, either abroad or at home, cannot be expected to be found at school" 36

Therefore, Mann makes two critical assumptions common to Victorian writing prior to the 1872 Education (Scotland) Act and not wholly defensible. Firstly, if the number of working children at this period had been higher in number, he would presumably have had to make an even greater subtraction. Child labour for him was defensible, and he could see no reason for doubting it;

"...but without compulsory regulations (against child employment), the adoption of which appears to be approved by no one, little hope can be indulged that this impediment to school attendance will be even gradually removed" 37

Linked with this is the assumption of voluntary attendance, for which only the church could be held responsible;

"The greatest hindrance (to attendance), the insensibility of parents being one which we may hope will either by the natural progress of society or, yet more likely, by the progress of religion, be in time removed" 38

He was not aware of the deficiency of the Victorian education system in meeting his requirement, through poverty, indifference of parents, want of improvement of primary schools and criminality and destitution, but the status quo is implicit in his work. A percentage of children were always regarded as having the burdens of work thrust upon them at an early age, not because it was an act of providence, but because it seemed that it had always been so.

In order to see more clearly the relation between age, work, scholars and social class, a somewhat more detailed analysis of the census figures for Scotland is needed.

The information contained in the 'household schedule' of the 1851 decennial census and Horace Mann's Education census of Scotland will not tell us how regularly children attended school, but in the first instance, what their parents wrote down as their status, and in the second instance, the number on the books of each school and those actually in attendance one day in March 1851.³⁹ A table is drawn up in the appendix to illustrate these points.⁴⁰

From the 1851 decennial census, each county shows the number of males and females between the ages of 5 and 15 years, who are eligible for education. The 'numbers occupied' column gives the total between these ages at work in 1851 for Scotland as a whole. The number of children engaged in occupations is 15% for boys in the northern counties, and 17% in the more industrialised south, which embraces the four largest cities of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee and Paisley. This group is likely to be made up almost entirely of the children of working class parents.

Girls occupied amounted to only 10% in Scotland as a whole, 8% for northern and 11% for the southern counties. The highest percentage of occupied males and females are significantly located in the three most industrialised counties of Renfrewshire, Dumbartonshire and Lanarkshire.

Stirlingshire and Fife come second in intensity of labour; 1 in 5 boys and 1 in 7 girls are at work between the ages of 5 and 15 years. Obviously where, the staple industry of an area is spinning or weaving, the children of this occupational group may be at work as early as six years of age. It must be borne in mind that educational deprivation for the working classes did not affect each occupational group to the same degree; some sections experienced relative advantages compared with the class as a whole.

Column 4 is the total of this age group receiving education at home and at school. As can be seen from column 7, the percentage of those receiving education at home as compared with school is very small, 1% for boys in Scotland and 2% for girls. There are regional variations however. In the more remote counties, or traditional middle class cities i.e. Edinburgh, the percentage may rise to 25% for boys, or 7% in the isolated area of Orkney and Shetland. Traditionally, girls have been deprived of education to attend to the wants of younger children at home, and this accounts for the number entered as educated at home.

The numbers receiving education of some sort as a percentage of the age group is high, (column 6) 61% for boys 57% for girls in Scotland and 63%, 57%; 60%, 57% in northern and southern counties respectively. In Roxburghshire, it is as high as 73% for boys. Only

Renfrewshire, Dumbartonshire and Lanarkshire show a 50% minimum.

The figures seem to counter the notion that education was far from universal and prove that voluntary school provision could educate six tenths at least of the child population. However, errors occur in view of the fact that figures are taken from the household census. Errors are evident in double counting and most of all, the optimism on the part of the parents to enter their children as scholars whether they were regular attenders or not. Supposing we take 60% receiving education as the most realistic estimate, how are we to arrive at a most satisfactory figure? Two ways are possible - to rearrange the 'household schedule' data or compare it with Horace Mann's 1851 education census. Each will be undertaken in turn.

Assuming that education at home if not adequate was at least impracticable, and we include only education at school, will there be any improvement? A drop of over two percent is visible. Similarly, from the household schedule, children 0-14 years at school as a percentage of the total age range can be computed. After amendments, for Scotland as a whole, 41% of boys are at school (column 10); 43% in the northern counties and 39% in the southern counties, dropping to its minimum in Renfrewshire, Dumbartonshire and Lanarkshire. For girls the total scholars will be 38% for Scotland with 39% and 37% for northern and southern counties respectively.



As this means that infant education from 0-5 years must have been well established, which it was not (column 12), the figures will err on the side of pessimism.

The education census enters two sets of figures for those belonging to school and those in attendance and the totals for Scotland between the two censuses differ by up to 9%. The larger discrepancy in accounting procedure for girls is indicative of their lower educational status and enforced domestic labour (column c). There is a difference between those on the books and in attendance of up to 16% for Scotland.

If we take those actually attending on the day of the education census for each county, and using the percentages in the 5-15 age range from the household schedule work out an approximate figure for those who would be 5-15 and actually at school, we have the results in columns E and F. It is this figure that approximates most readily to an actual estimate of the numbers at school for Scotland, it is 49% for boys and 40% for girls. Individual counties obviously show variations. The three industrial counties figure worse for attendance of both boys and girls.

So now we have two sets of figures, the most optimistic being taken from the household schedule and the most realistic being the figures from Horace Mann's census. What do they show? Fifteen percent of the total male population aged 5-15 years in Scotland was occupied or at work in 1851, between 49% and 61% would be at school

for a maximum of three years (if they were working class), if middle class four years and upwards. The rest? - presumably they roamed the streets. These are overall figures, even in Lanarkshire 1 in 5 boys were at work, 2 in 5 at school and 2 in 5 on the streets. Within Glasgow in separate areas, it could be as high as 4 in 5 at work.

It is hard to avoid the conclusion that in industrialised regions or counties, the proletariat suffered relative deterioration in educational status and position compared with other classes of society.

b) An Overview of Attempts Between 1850 and 1872 to Deal with the Altered Circumstances.

In analysing the effects of the industrial revolution to 1851, we have observed the rapid falling away of parish school provision in the new industrial society, and the appearance of England as a major competitor in the provision of popular education. Scotland was at a loss, given the old system of educational arrangements, to distribute educational advantages to a population continually increasing in size. Apart from burgh schools her cities were totally without statutory educational arrangements, and Glasgow's steaming cellar was the worst in the United Kingdom. If conservatives in education doubted the evidence in 1851, on the eve of the second Reform Act in 1867, the Argyll Commission had confirmed their worst fears, and the 1872 Education (Scotland) Act forced their more enterprising servants to cope with the full consequences of what they had done.

Thus the 1850's-70's is the period marked by the struggle for national education, the struggle for the minds of men and the education bills that came in the wake of the vast engine of reform. Eight education bills were introduced in Parliament in the period 1850 to 1871. The Lord Advocate, Sir James Moncrieff's famous education bills of 1854 and 1855 either failed to complete the second reading or were rejected by the House of Lords. The National Education Association founded in Edinburgh in 1850 was mainly responsible for their support.

Because comprehensive statistical information was lacking, writers of pamphlets and speeches could make sincere but inaccurate objections to a national educational system well on into the 1860's, before the Argyll reports quenched the hostility to change. It could be easily admitted that there was little educational destitution or at least no proof of it. Only when Moncrieff's bills⁴¹ attacked the superstructure and management of the parochial schools did the Church of Scotland rally in fear of losing control of religious instruction to a secular public school supported by the rates. It was the fear of governmental control, a nationalist response favouring the local control of education; a reaction by one section of the ecclesiastical bourgeoisie to the imminent loss of control of working class education.⁴² But ten years later, the Argyll Commission added reason to irrational ideology.

The Commission sat for four years from 1864-1868, took evidence from 136 witnesses, and produced three reports on parochial, burgh, grant aided, middle class, normal and adventure schools. Evidence was heard from three types of witnesses; directly, either orally or in writing on a general topic of Scottish education; evidence directly to the Commission but restricted to a topic e.g. industrial schools; and those whose evidence reached the commissioners indirectly through the reports of assistant commissioners.

The major English inquiry into elementary education, at this time was the report of the Newcastle Commission in 1859 which was instrumental in the establishment of the Revised Code of 1862. The Code aimed to force schoolmasters to concentrate on proficient attainment of the 3 R's by making Privy Council grants depend on the number of pupils and their proficiency in these subjects. This was a threat to Scottish education, especially the teaching of higher branches, or secondary subjects in parish schools, as it threatened to relegate them to elementary school status.

The 1862 rulings applied to Scotland but educational grants were not dependent upon them. So the outcry was something of a false alarm. Nevertheless, reformers found themselves crucifying the 'lad o' pairts' on the cross of English educational reform,⁴³ and somewhat characteristically, Robert Lowe, Vice President of the Committee of the Privy Council, promised to look into Scottish circumstances.

The Argyll Commission then was a means for redressing grievances, collecting facts and a means of gathering evidence to force through reform which the government wished to see in Scottish education. The make-up of the Commission - ten Church of Scotland, four Free Church, two United Presbyterians and six uncertain - was highly favourable to the parochial school.

Ideologically, the Church of Scotland wanted to retain control of the parochial school arguing that the teacher's job was a religious one, needing proper clerical supervision. The Free Church and United Presbyterian church wanted to break this monopoly, consequently they argued that the parochial school was originally established for the benefit of the entire presbyterian community before the split in church government in 1843.

As eleven commissioners were educated within the Scottish parish/burgh school tradition and ten attended Scottish Universities, all being Scots by birth and largely Scots by education, they were some distance from neutrality.

There were a large number of Free Church witnesses, but small representation for Catholics, 50% of oral witnesses came from Edinburgh, 6 oral witnesses and 7 correspondents from Glasgow, from Aberdeen 1, from Dundee none. Therefore, the areas with the most rapid

growth in industrialisation were under-represented. Also, several Glasgow witnesses were only minority groups, representing educational views of their particular church. The single Catholic was from Edinburgh with little knowledge of the west, and few witnesses represented the mining areas.

Setting aside these reservations, the Commission gave a comprehensive view of what industrialisation had done to Scotland's education, and above all was an indictment of the voluntary principle in education. We need to look into its findings in closer detail, especially social class and geographical inequalities.

Well-heeled English observers noted with admiration the fruits of a democratic system of education that found its highest expression in the Scottish burgh schools and Universities;

"If I am asked to say what is the most important conclusion that I derive from my brief inspection of Scottish burgh schools, what is the educational principle which that tour has most strongly impressed on my mind, it is this - education to be good must be popular" 44

No doubt this feeling stemmed from a peculiar admixture of social arrangements. Historically, religion, poverty and geographical proximity had early on sanctioned a degree of social intercourse between merchants, professionals and the tenuous lower rungs of the social ladder, not found in English society.

A Scottish taste for tenement living, particularly in the wynds of Glasgow, in the Edinburgh High Street and the Glasgow Trongate, (before the inevitable move to Edinburgh New Town, and the exodus to the fresher slopes of Glasgow's West Side) had at least convinced the Scottish merchant classes that all people suffered the same problems together. The closeness and numerical size of the common people in Scotland taught wiser men that perhaps they themselves were only a few steps from the poorhouse.

Fair shares in secondary education for those with the intellectual equipment and the motivation cultivated a taste for instruction, thereby opening up the Universities and seminaries to a few poor scholars to a degree feared by a Matthew Arnold, a bishop, or an English aristocrat. A seal of approval was set on middle school social mixture, yet the educational soup kitchen ended there. Unfortunately, what persisted and what only time could eradicate were the unverifiable claims for Scottish intellectual superiority.

Much of Scotland's educational traditions and blame for its exaggerated claims must be put at the door of the Universities, which throughout the nineteenth century were losing a grip of their reputation for a general philosophical education.⁴⁵ Education was the chief form of resistance to social encroachment, and provided a rallying point for national principle which could still

bring together the dissident religious factions.

The Scottish educational tradition was the Universities' open-door policy, the criteria of entry to these poorly endowed institutions was the ability to pay. Consequently, a popular approach was made necessary by the youth of the students and the curriculum had been a general education in philosophy and science. In nearly every case, the new conditions or urban expansion and development rendered necessary the revision of an inherited scholastic routine of a fairly definite character.

In 1858, an act instituted an honours scheme, resulting in a general education for ministers, school teachers, and minor officials, and 'honours' for those joining the ranks of imperial Britain. Combined with the recommendation of a Commission in 1878 to the effect that the educational goal was the assimilation of the Scottish system to the English one, it forced Universities to assert their role as standard bearers of the country's tradition. In 1889 unrestricted entry was abolished, and matriculation exams were introduced to force up the school leaving age two years, thereby favouring the pupil of the good fee paying school in which English values were influential.

After 1872, when the effective control of Scotland's education was transferred to London and put under English authority, the past was tinged with nostalgia. Yet how

open was the secondary education sector and how well did the parish school mix elementary and secondary education? We must turn to the findings of the Argyll Report.

c) Burgh Schools

Before the nineteenth century, the Scottish burghs were apparently under exactly the same statutory obligations to provide schools as the countryside; the act of the Privy Council of 1616 and the acts of Parliament of 1633 and 1669 made no distinction at all between urban and rural areas and stated simply that every parish, wheresoever it might be, had to provide one school and one schoolmaster. Almost invariably under the direct control of the town council and supported by the funds of the council, burgh schools quickly became grammar schools.

Characteristically, the Scottish parish school carried on instruction in the dead languages, often preparing scholars for the Universities, while the burgh schools frequently undertook the education of infants from the earliest ages. The lack of a demarcation between infants, elementary, primary and secondary schools with often two or more stages found in one school, gave the educational machinery of the country a heterogeneous character. Children left parochial and burgh schools at 15 and 16 years. Not surprisingly, therefore, Universities covered much of the ground which in England

was occupied by schools, that is they instructed youths of from 15-18 years in such subjects as those which were taught in the 4th, 5th and 6th forms of English public schools.

Whereas the English grammar schoolmaster was both a teacher and a lodging-house keeper, getting income from both sources, his Scottish counterpart relied almost entirely on fees. Scholars boarded and lodged where they pleased, and as regards the particular and special cases of very poor scholars, it had one decisive advantage over the English system. In England, it was impossible for the very poor scholars to attend the public school without being dependent on charity. As boarding was a part of the master's business which brought him most profit, he was sure to neglect the day boy's interests or at least it is certain that the curriculum and style of the school would so eventually shape themselves as to favour the rich, and to exclude or harass the poor. While it was cheaper than in England, it was infinitely more so in the sense of being accessible to the very poor.

As the Scottish burgh school was very modestly endowed in the English sense of lands or money conveyed to the permanent and unalienable use of the school, it could scarcely be said to be endowed at all. Educational charities for the middle class were absent also, and the Scots were willing and prepared to pay for education, the cost of burgh schools being borne by parents, even if this meant the study of one subject alone to the exclusion of the rest.

The absence of endowment had made the schools dependent on popular favour, resulting in the study of the wants and tastes and instincts of the public. The genteel refusing to use the same school as the respectable, while the respectable disliked any association with the humbler classes, and other such social grudges and discriminations were therefore absent, preventing the gulf that had emerged in England between men of cultivation and the middle classes.

Yet sons of the highest families or the large landed proprietors, or the wealthiest professional men did not attend burgh schools but mostly went to Eton, Harrow, Rugby then Oxford and Cambridge. In Scotland there was no 'superior' education in the English sense of the term. The greater wealth of England had enabled the country to create and maintain a high standard of superior education whereas the comparative poverty of Scotland had tended to shorten the period which the majority of men could devote to unremunerative toil. There had not been the accumulation of wealth in private hands or for the benefit of institutions, which was found in the South. Hence, there was not such a large class of those who could afford superior education and consequently, the education given by the great Scottish public institutions had become of a middle or secondary kind and superior education had not been much studied, or at least not on such a scale or with such advantages as in England.

According to Matthew Arnold, Scotland lacked "la grande culture"⁴⁶ importing only general knowledge. This naturally had influenced the customs of that comparatively small class who in Scotland required superior education. Those who could afford it preferred to send their sons to the English public schools, to free themselves from the Scottish accent with its provincialism, in preparation for living in the best society. It must not be forgotten how closely the popularity of the schools with the poorer, as well as the richer classes in Scotland, depended on the fact of their being day schools, or the fact of their being no forced curriculum, but allowing each parent to choose his own subjects of instructions; and on the extent to which due care was given to science and modern subjects as well as classics.

With respect to their social mix, burgh schools fulfilled most significantly the functions which the founders of grammar schools intended them to perform. Internally as every boy was promoted at the end of each year into a higher class whether he was idle or diligent, the Scottish system sacrificed the particular and special cultivation of the few for the general benefit of the many. Here again it avoided streaming by social class and so added to its democratic showcase.

The Argyll Commission investigated four types of school for the middle class which they defined thus;

"... those which socially are between the landed aristocracy and the wealthy professional and commercial classes on the one hand and the labouring classes on the other" ⁴⁷

These were;

- 1) Burgh Schools - under regulation and control by burghs and Public schools not in burghs.
- 2) Academies - generally established by subscription and managed by directors.
- 3) Private Schools - boarding or day, private property conducted as private speculations.
- 4) Colleges or Institutions - not in burghs.

In all, 87 public secondary schools were investigated, 33 burgh schools,⁴⁸ 23 academies, 11 private, the rest burgh and parochial - 28 made no returns. The total scholars amounted to 15,146 (10,823 boys and 4,323 girls) with 90% attendance, supplying instruction to more than two thirds of the middle class population of the country, although many were outside Scotland or in all girls schools.

Whereas 1 in 1,300 of the population in England were in public schools, 1 in 205 of Scotland's population were; with one matriculated student for every thousand Scottish population. Unfortunately, the commissioners omit schools exclusively for girls. Altogether there are 79 burghs, all but three having schools known by different designations.

Likewise the University teachers influence on education was strong with 36.3% of teachers having a degree and 35.3% having attended University but matriculated with

no degree. The commissioners were of the opinion that the wide social mix had lowered the intellectual attainments possible at essentially middle-class schools and expected something higher. Because of the lack of standardisation, they recommended common curriculum, regular examinations, government inspection and re-organisation of their educational mortifications. How varied was the social mix and what were its geographical limitations?

Whilst noting that the number of scholars in burgh schools was only 15,146 or 5% of the total school population, they must have tended to take principally the aristocracy of labour. An example will illustrate the point.

Of the five schools from which statistics have been taken - Ayr, Hamilton, Dumfries Academy, Aberdeen Grammar School and Edinburgh Royal High School⁴⁹ - Group 5 - merchants, traders, and shopkeepers figure largely in four out of five cases. In Hamilton Academy, almost three quarters of the scholars came from the petite bourgeoisie. The professionals are well represented in every school, but landed proprietors figure only marginally, preferring schools in England for their sons. Edinburgh Royal High School, with its wide reputation, took the largest percentage of 7.1%.

Artisans and labourers are well behind small shopkeepers and clerks with incomes of from £150-£250 per annum, so Edinburgh's Royal High School excludes them altogether.

It appears from these figures that professional men and merchants were the most highly favoured burgh school clients, artisans and labourers were bottom of the favouritism league in four out of five cases.

We may infer from the figures that, compared with English experiences, burgh school education in Scotland appealed at once to the most educated, but had a large bulk of scholars from the lower middle class and the self sacrificing upper echelons of the working class.

d) Universities

Like the burgh schools, the Scottish Universities had a long tradition of openness to all who could pay. They drew in, in the early decades of the nineteenth century, substantial numbers of students from areas outside Scotland. During the Napoleonic Wars when the Grand Tour for the English nobility was impracticable, it became fashionable for young noblemen to spend some time at one of the northern Universities.

Poorer students were able to take advantage of the lower cost of attendance. At Glasgow, "chambers in the college cost about £4 per year in the mid eighteenth century and lodging could be had for as little as 1/- a week"⁵⁰ therefore, it was possible to obtain a University education at an expense in cash of as little as about £5 sterling a year. Even when the cost of education went up and fees were raised at Glasgow in 1800 and 1818, the maximum outlay of a poor student for one academic year was

about £20, compared with £200-£300 on an average for a year's attendance at Oxford or Cambridge.

W.M. Mathews investigated the fathers' occupation of matriculated students at Glasgow University from the 1740's to 1830's and his conclusions bear out our general impression (See Appendix Table 2 (III)). The two most significant trends in the figures appear in 'Industry' and 'Commerce' and 'Nobility and Landed' groups. The former increased their percentage from 26.2% to 49.9% between the first and second decades and remained at the latter level into the 1830's. These trends would seem to reflect the changing class structure in a time of industrialisation.

Further, Table 2 (IIIc) the 'constitution of the industrial and commercial group' reveals that middle class students were preponderant at 96.2% in 1740-9, but had their relative importance halved to 48% by 1790-9, while working class students rose numerically from 1.9% to 47.9% over the same period. In the 1790's, working class students accounted for almost 25% of the total student body thus ranking them more important than any other group outside 'industry and commerce'.

Working class students were probably the sons of skilled artisans and small master craftsmen in the main, men able to profit from the general expansion of wealth and commerce. The increased importance of such groups was not continued into the 1830's, by then the middle class percentage was almost double the working class one -

no doubt brought about by the failure of skilled artisans to improve their position in a period of rapid technological innovation and of weak trade union defences. The rising cost of education may also explain the decline in numerical importance of students from tenant and working class farming backgrounds.

Alongside industry and commerce, the ministry appears to have exercised the strongest appeal for Glasgow students (see Table 2(III)b). As clerics enjoyed positions of considerable prestige in Scottish society, this was perhaps the best avenue of escape from the working class to the professions. It was a fund of talent that guaranteed continual recruitment to man the barricades of moral rearmament in the teeming cities.

Without doubt the generally wide class range pertaining at Glasgow can be related to the substantial developments which had taken place in the Scottish school system, with the network of parish and burgh schools offering education to the poor and the wealthy alike under the aegis of the Church, and linked to the three Universities then in existence.

A major attack upon this University tradition was that it was at once too philosophical, too much concerned with a general, liberal education at the expense of highly specialised and academic forms of instruction. However the deficiencies were in some measure the price which Scotland paid for maintaining a democratic ideal. It is doubtful if aristocratic objectives in education

could have co-existed with a democratic student intake. Classics would have been unlikely to have attracted the sons of merchants, artisans and farmers in such large numbers as it did. In so far as the Scottish Universities responded to the industrial age by taking in working class students and attracting youths who intended to go into business, they were arguably performing a more valuable social function than schools in the South.

The findings of the Argyll Commission defended the Universities national characteristics and backed its argument with returns on social positions of 882 students in Latin, Greek and mathematic classes in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen and St. Andrews Universities, (see Table 2(IV)). The professional classes amounted to about one third of the intake of all Universities, St. Andrews had correspondingly the highest professional intake and the lowest intake of labourers. Artisans and skilled labourers did not fall below 1 in 10 of students, and in Edinburgh the proportion was approximately 1 in 5. Upon closer investigation of the occupational breakdown, if we ignore Class VIII 'profession not given', we have the total class distribution as in Column II.

Now these totals tell us nothing about how well represented was each Class, only their magnitude. If, on the other hand, we use the number for the total occupied Scottish male population in that category in 1861, we have some indication of the relative magnitude

of each group (Table 2 (IV)).

In the occupied population 5.3% are in commerce, 12.8% in agriculture, 6.2% in shopkeeping, 30.6% are artisans and skilled labourers, 30.1% are labourers and 11.3% form the indefinite grouping. A comparison of both sets of figures strengthens the point that although the professions amounted to only 3.7% of the occupied population, they were over-represented in the Universities taking one third of the places, while two thirds or 66% of the working population had only 24.4% of the available places. Whatever the social mix, there was an element of educational disenfranchisement about which the Argyll commissioners made no comment.

Table 2 (V) discloses the ages of students and professions of fathers of 1,212 who attended Professor Blackie's Greek classes in the University of Edinburgh for six years 1860-6. The distribution between social classes is similar to the previous table, but it is noticeable that the mean age of scholars attending from the artisan and labouring classes is much higher, so substantiating the national characteristics of the Scottish Universities. Again the educated classes i.e. professionals, are over-represented in Universities while the working class are under-represented, and these were generally the aristocracy of working class intellect, the creme de la creme of the artisan and labouring classes who, through circumstances, or personal inclination, could afford the relative luxury of the University's

open-door. If anything, they represent the auto-didactics who entered somewhat late in life. For those without finance, inclination, the correct social background and the wrong geographical location, other circumstances prevailed.

e) The Progress of Elementary Education Outside the Cities

The Argyll Commission could not escape the conclusion that;

"...whatever may be the quality of the education Scotland is well, if not adequately supplied with teachers and places of instruction" 51

and;

"...it would appear that whatever might be the case in individual districts, the want of schools was not so great as had been generally supposed" 52

No doubt by the 1860's, it owed much to the well ingrained system of aid through the Privy Council. Its principle was that persons interested in education of the poor could, with state aid and inspection be encouraged to provide education. It did not establish but assisted in establishing schools, did not seek to educate directly, but assisted in educating, leaving the internal management free.⁵³

The new batch of elementary school statistics, the first for fifteen years, revealed old inconsistencies, opened new sores, but was a further validation of the 1851 findings. If we put several tables together and put the counties in descending order of educational impediments i.e. poor ratio of scholars to population;

lack of schools and poor attendance, we have a table as exhibited in Appendix 2 (VI).

Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, Ayrshire and Dumbartonshire, the four most industrialised cities, score consistently high on all three counts. The percentage of children between 4 and 15 years not attending school was over 40% in all cases; it was over 50% if we include children above 2 and under 15 years of age. Shetland has the worst score in 3 out of 4 cases with the ratio of scholars to population of 1 in 18, double its nearest rival. It can only be inferred that geographical isolation and agricultural labour had set it well outside Scottish traditions, to be accounted for not by industrialisation alone.

Perhaps it is not surprising that the industrial counties have the worst ratio of schools to population, when good attendance was a function of accessibility and vigilance on the part of local ministers and educational reformers. Even within a county itself wide variations in the ratio of scholars to population are evident. 54 Widespread church activity could reduce the ratio to as low as 1 in 5.5 as in the Lanarkshire parishes of Dolphinston and Watson.

It goes without saying that industrialisation affected the Scottish agricultural population, but its progress was uneven, in some cases leaving entire communities or occupations poorly endowed with a supportive institutional framework. Where compulsory school attendance was unheard of, illiteracy would engulf a whole community

while outcrops of non-parochial schools filled in between the gaps, to earn the struggling teachers a poor living. Fortunately, unusual feats of intellectual ingenuity would assist the establishment of subscription schools or spur the nomadic herdsmen to even greater labour in the name of self instruction.

In 1861 A.C. Sellar and Lieut. Col. C.F. Maxwell were sent by the commissioners to investigate conditions in 17 counties or country districts of Scotland, embracing 133 parishes and registration districts with a population of 209,741. In all there were 60,124 children 3 to 15 years, 484 schools with accommodation for 35,591 at 8 square feet per child, 33,451 on the roll and 26,971 attending. These not only embraced agricultural and fishing populations but mining, iron-working, weaving, millworking and quarrying;

"...we selected parishes...so as to get as many specimens of different classes as possible ... and were led to take the ordinary average parishes which exhibited the truly regular common working of the educational machinery of the county." 55

The commissioners discovered that in the south of Scotland, particularly in the counties of Dumfries, Peebles, Roxburgh, Edinburgh, Ayr and in the stewartry of Kirkcudbright, nearly all the native population could read with ease and the majority could write.⁵⁶ Only the Irish settlers were in a state of great ignorance and as a rule could neither read nor write. Where the Scottish population of these counties was ignorant, it was the

result of their own negligence, as the commissioners believed the means of education to be sufficient.

In the Midland counties, Stirling, Perth, Fife, Aberdeen, Moray and Nairn - with the exception of older people and many from among the fishing population - the great majority of the poor could read and some could write. On the other hand, highland crofters and fishermen of Ross and Sutherland were lacking in education.

Without exception, the rural population of every class appeared to be aware of the advantages of education and in different degrees desired that their children should be educated.⁵⁷ In fulfilment of the wish for education, a marked distinction was to be drawn between different classes of the population, ranging from those with a vague wish to those groups that actively strived for betterment.

A marked disinterestedness was noted among the crofters, weavers, miners and some classes of the agricultural population. Where there was a regular school for miners' children and miners were taxed for its support, the children attended well in summer, otherwise a school was absent. When certificates of ability to read and write were not strictly exacted before children were admitted to the pits.

In the case of the fishing population more than any other, the children found it easy to earn wages at an age where they ought to have been at school. At nine years of age in the north, boys were taken away to work

about the boats, bait lines and carry bait. From this age until 14, girls remained actively engaged at home. At 14 the girls were sent out to service with other fishers for nine months at an income of £1-£5. During the herring season 10s. to £3, or 6d. per barrel, could be made. It appeared that there was;

"... more ignorance among them than among any other class of people with whom we were thrown and there is less indication of an intelligent desire to have their children taught" 58

On the other hand, among artisans, very few heads of families connected with ironwork could not read or write, and all children attended work schools recognised by managers.

Children of small farmers were less regular in attendance than ploughman mostly because the value of a child's unpaid labour was greater to the farmer than to the ploughman. The question of children's exploitation and the sacrifice of education will be discussed in more detail later, but at this juncture it is sufficient to realise that the profit criteria could cut across occupational groupings and was not necessarily confined to the low paid or poor who needed the money most. Among village tradesmen, the reason for regular schooling was that the parents were financially independent of the child, and they wished their offspring to get sedentary occupations like book-keeping or storekeeping.

Perhaps the worst placed of all in the league of circumstance were the shepherds and toll keepers who lived outside areas of large populations, so that the

education of their children became a burden. Although the living quarters of the shepherd were most isolated; "...it was a very uncommon thing to meet a shepherd who is unable to read and write". 59

The commissioners reached the conclusion that learning was lowest among the fishing, mining and crofting populations; attendance needed to be improved; the demand for education corresponded to the state of education of parents, and the demand for elementary branches was common among the population but higher among tradesmen. Individual exceptions could always be found to all of these.

In view of these revelations, the chief accessible centre for learning, the parish school, came under a scathing attack being to a large extent accountable for rural educational deficiencies. They took in, in the parishes under review, only 21% of children between 3 and 15 years, the rest belonging to non parochial schools;

"Except in the best of parochial schools where the Dick Bequest is in operation with one or two exceptions, the efficiency of teaching in parochial schools cannot be put higher than the average teaching, in the best Free Church, General Assembly, Episcopal and subscription schools." 60

Conclusion

The state of educational advance is best summed up in Appendix Table 2 (VII). Three quarters of the scholars were now being educated in an institutional network outside the parochial school system - in Lanarkshire it was as much as 89%. Only the southern lowland and border counties

drew one third to one half of their children into the traditional parochial net.

The comparative adequacy of the eighteenth century Scottish parish school system was collapsing by mid century under the weight of industrialisation. Even the European experience, notably that of Prussia with its system of compulsory school attendance, did not mean it was more advantageously placed. Anyhow, comparisons between countries were difficult to make due to a lack of statistical reliability. Certainly conditions in Scotland were more favourable than in England and Wales, as we have observed. By 1866 a ratio of 1 in 7.9 of the population attending school was better than the 1851 figure of 1 in 9.3.

By the 1860's the unevenly structured working class, more unionised, more concentrated and having an indigenous cultural response of its own, could barely muster 50% of its membership to attend some formal school for at least five years of its working life. The unpaid economic value of child labour was out of all proportion to its cost to the employer and to the parents who were responsible for its reproduction. The 'little' labourers contributed in many ways to keeping the population at subsistence level. The child as a unit of economic value to the parent meant its education was left entirely to the whims and fancies of adults, and the Scottish traditional appreciation of the worth of learning could now be completely swamped by such everyday needs as survival.

Besides disease, overcrowding, slums and oppressive working hours, manifest ignorance defiantly set a barrier against education. The fruits of limited education seemed but worthless prizes to those whose duty it was to toil. It was simply a case of what one never had, one never missed. Where employers, either from philanthropy or mistrust of government supervision, begrudgingly provided some means to literary attainment a superstructure of institutions arose phoenix-like out of the industrial chiliasm of despair. Almost simultaneously there were earnest endeavours on the part of the church, evangelists, the state, employers, and the poor law authorities to cope, or perhaps mop up like some vast cerebral sanitary exercise the ignorant, the criminal, the untamed mass, the home heathen, the despairing and the vicious.

The reason for embarking on such a task and the way it was done, what they found and how it affected their consciousness, is the story we must now tell. In order to answer the question why the cities should encourage such innovation and assess the practicability of educational reform, an overview of Glasgow must be attempted first. That means to study the interaction between education and society at a time when the system of education was in process of development, with an area large enough to form a recognisable unit, yet small enough for detailed investigation; and to suggest possible points of contrast

between the findings of a specific local study and those revealed by the history of education in the country as a whole and the local origin of large movements of opinion.

Chapter III

Inside Glasgow - A Study of Education As A Social Condition of Existence

On a visit to Glasgow one is impressed by the contouring of a city, with an urban geography that seems to have made deep impressions upon its social conditions. In 1924, James Stewart, Clyde member of Parliament, outraged at a century's neglect, declared that Glasgow was "Earth's nearest suburb to hell",¹ for tenement living had come to spell out the paradigm for existence.

Behind early nineteenth century tenements was the back green, a relic of the days when country and town were next door neighbours. Soon the green was concreted, and a new set of houses arose behind the front group known as back-lands, with their characteristic turnpike stair, poor ventilation, and inaccessability to the sunlight. With these limited specifications to living quarters, there soon sprang up in working class speech the familiar 'single ends', 'ticketed houses', and 'farmed out' houses. Understanding education in nineteenth century Glasgow is understanding this growth outwards from the centre, and the consequent divisions in the population almost created by living quarters alone. First we must understand how industrialisation affected Glasgow's social framework.

Glasgow is a city advantageously situated for commercial pursuits, possessing facilities peculiarly favourable for trade, being placed on the borders of one

of the richest coal and mineral fields in the Island, with which it communicates by the Monkland Canal and by various railroads. It is connected on the one hand with the Atlantic by the Clyde and on the other with the North Sea, by the Forth and Clyde navigation and the river Forth. Notwithstanding these local advantages, Glasgow was not notable for trade until a considerable time after the 1707 Union with England. Its importance from a commercial point of view may be attributed to improvements made to the Clyde and the enterprising spirit of its merchants and manufacturers.

Curing of salmon and herring, whale fishing, rope making, tanning and brewing, were largely established in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Manufacture of linens, lawns, cambrics and other articles of similar fabric was introduced into Glasgow about 1725, and continued to be the staple manufacture until they were succeeded by muslins. Later invention applied to spinning and weaving and the achievement of steam power brought machinery to the people, rather than people to the machinery, and the location of industry thus moved from the country with its plentiful supply of water to Glasgow city, with its convenient reservoir of labour.

By 1791 there were fifty two cotton mills containing 511,200 spindles and having a capital value of at least £1 million. It is estimated that during the year 1818, 105,000,000 yards of cotton cloth were manufactured.² Although cotton manufacture had been the staple trade

of the city and neighbourhood for a long period, iron manufacture with its various branches appeared as the one likely to furnish the greatest employer of labour and capital from the inexhaustible store of material for making iron with which the neighbourhood abounded. The local situation of Glasgow too was favourable for the cheap conveyance of the bulky and heavy articles to all quarters of the world, so there developed the manufacture of steam engines for spinning, weaving, propelling vessels, and machine tools. One hears so much of the stream of Scots who went South to enrich the business life of England at this time that the significance of the industrial pull for workers and managers is overlooked.

For four hundred years, Glasgow had consisted of five central thoroughfares³ - the High Street, Trongate, Saltmarket, Bridgegate and the Gallowgate. The High Street ran from the Cathedral in the north, past the University down to Glasgow Green and the Clyde in the south. The Gorbals did not fall within the Royalty but formed a separate community to the south of the Clyde.

In thoroughfares like the Bridgegate, Saltmarket and Drygate, stood the houses of merchants or those who had made their name through trade. It was the very same streets that by 1850 were the bane of social reformers, having declined in respectability to such an extent that they were classifiable as being situated in the worst areas of Glasgow. What had happened was that the wealthy middle class moved west out of the smoke, disease

and filth, to the scenic beauty and purer air of Gilmorehill. The centre of town was left to rot until the City Improvement Trust in the 1860's flattened the area for half a mile around the Cross and erected new overcrowded tenements.

The last bastion of the pre-industrial world to leave the heart of Glasgow was the University, taking itself from the High Street to its new buildings on the west side. The proximity of the Old and New Vennel in the High Street was a disease risk to University professors and the area had sunk so low that it was declared seemingly unfit for an institute of higher learning. A railway depot was built on the site.

By the 1880's the once elegant city that Daniel Defoe had praised in 1727;⁴

"It is a large, stagely and well-built city, standing on a plain in a manner of four square and the five principal streets are the fairest for breadth and the finest built I have ever seen in one city together"

was decaying at its centre being criss-crossed with railways, that in the main had flattened the worst of the rookeries, and skirted the more prosperous regions of Blythwood and the West End.

The urban sprawl spread well into Barony parish by now, and Cowcaddens, the Calton, and Hutcheson housed the weaving population of the city, while the Gorbals was punctuated by Govan Iron Works and Dixon's Colliery. Anderston and the Broomielaw formed the western extremity that by 1900 was incorporated into the ribbon development of shipbuilding along the Clyde.

The neat rectangular layout of Blythwood, similar to Edinburgh's New Town, and sandwiched between Cowcaddens and the Clyde, was the roosting place of the merchant, business and professional classes. It stood in stark contrast to the conditions prevailing around the Saltmarket. The map of 1865 shows three Poor Houses, Govan, Barony and City, the famous Prison in Duke Street, and the peak of the Cathedral which was now dwarfed by the stalk of Tennent's chemical works at St. Rollox.

It was Irish immigration, the influx of highlanders, and with poor transport facilities, the need to be near one's place of work, that brought the decay of Glasgow for at least a mile around the Cross. Yet it is the resulting overcrowded conditions, the industry, the inequality and the nomadic character of a part of its population, that provides an interesting basis for an analysis of social conditions of proletarian life, and education, which, in itself, is a function of these social conditions of existence.

Undoubtedly here conditions were at the extreme; the Cowcaddens, Bridgeton, Govan, Calton and Anderston were reflections in a deeper hue of the circumstances that prevailed elsewhere. Only Dundee could compare in social disadvantages. Although the Glasgow population contained not a typical mining population, nor a typical weaving population, the heart of Glasgow in the mid nineteenth century was the heart of the

industrial population.

In the course of our discussion of Glasgow, we must show that education is a social condition of existence, rather than the sum total of a number of institutional influences. Its influence can be, if we wish, measurable as statistics of literacy. For this to be the case we need first an investigation of what may be called educational indices, part of, yet analytically separate from, the total social condition of the working class, and yet defining the limits of education among this class. Here the indices are reflected in mortality rates, unemployment, sanitary conditions and overcrowding, each pressing upon the choices of the individual worker. If the worker shared a room with four others, worked ten hours per day, suffered from disease twice a year, and was lucky if he survived until he was twenty, in the absence of electric light, educational influences upon him were about as significant as luxury living in a mansion.

Bearing in mind though, that each working class family traversed in its lifetime, through at least one cycle of poverty depending on the ages of the children, different stratas of the proletariat experienced the discomforts of living in different degrees and at different times. The lower one sunk socially, the higher was the emotional and mental poverty, because such people were dispossessed of the accumulated knowledge of man. The aristocracy of labour, distant from the effects

of our social indices, formed the aristocracy of intellect.

In nineteenth century society one factor remained constant, the worker lived only as long as he found work and found work only as long as his labour increased capital, education was incidental to labour and usually only administered to increase its efficiency.

Education's incidental characteristics made it a precarious commodity in the productive relationship - to be lost almost completely when labour was unemployed.

There were some groups who could appropriate it for various lengths of time, depending in most cases on the length of the working day, in others upon the physical characteristics of the environment and length of life.

Proof 1 - Conditions in Nineteenth Century Glasgow

a) Population & Composition⁵

At the time of the Reformation in 1560, the population of Glasgow was approximately 4,500. In 1610 Archbishop Spottiswood directed that the population of the city be ascertained and it amounted to 6,644.⁶ In 1660 at the Restoration of Charles II, there were 14,678 inhabitants. There was then a drop to 11,948, and only in 1740 was it restored to its mid seventeenth century level of 17,034 persons. James Sinclair's enumeration in 1791 accounted 66,578 persons.⁷

Generally, the most populous parishes and the poorest, are north of the Clyde (excluding the extensive Barony

parish): St. Mary's or the Tron, St. Andrews, Blackfriars, and the Outer High Parish. The statistics collected in 1819 by James Cleland, the superintendent of public works, and Glasgow's first important statistician, exhibits the social texture of the areas.⁸

In all ten parishes, including the Barony and Gorbals, there is one child under twelve for every three of the population. Children are always numerous. The average size of each family is four - parents and two children - (obviously this says little about the large families of the working class and poor, compared with those of the rich) with an average of two persons per apartment. Cleland gives the number of domestic servants per head of population in each parish, but it is difficult to judge whether this was their place of residence or merely where they worked, therefore little can be inferred as to the class composition. It is worth recording that St. John's has the lowest number of servants per head, perhaps an indication of its high working class concentration. Despite Blackfriars housing one of the worst slums, it had at its centre the University building.

It is noticeable from Cleland's statistics⁹ that lodgers form a fluctuating sector of each parish, at least one in ten of all inhabitants being lodgers. In the oldest part of town it rises as high as one in nine. These people represent the floating and statistically unaccountable section of the lumpen-proletariate who

swell the tenements at different periods of the year. Being nomad and transitory, they usually comprise the semi-criminal and generally uneducated and ineducable part of the population. The churches continued a war of attrition against this group in their attempts to sink shafts of light to the most sunken of the populace. As early as 1819 St. Mary's parish had the highest percentage of lodgers, one in nine, and also the most Irish - sixteen percent of all residents, even before the great Irish influx of the 1830's and 1840's. At all times most lodgers in this parish were Irish, as it was a focal point or meeting place for new immigrants.

James Cleland also surveyed the early occupational structure.¹⁰ In the Royalty, Barony and Gorbals, the embryonic working class in mills, foundries, distilleries, breweries, and collieries comprises one quarter of Glasgow's occupied population. A further 28% are weavers and warpers, roughly 25% skilled artisans, 8% labourers, the rest - approximately 8% - belong to the professional class. More adequate investigations of population composition appeared in the 1830's with the earnest endeavours of religious missionaries and a government commission on religious instruction in Scotland.¹¹

From the commission's investigations of the working class and their different denominations, a social class map of individual parishes begins to appear.¹² Overall 80% of Glasgow's inner city population is earmarked as working class. The working class is defined by the

church commissioners as;

"...comprehending all agricultural labourers, operatives, handcraftsmen and others of the like condition having not more than 30/- per week if unmarried and not more than 40/- if married" 13

Generally it excluded shopkeepers who were looked upon by local residents as the rich of their district.

Of the remaining 20% of Glasgow's population, a not inconsiderable amount were made up of such shopkeepers and traders. As would be expected, some parishes have a higher density of workers than others: the Bridgegate has the lowest while St. Marks has the highest.

b) Density and Distribution

Appendix Table 3 (III) reveals the distribution of population between parishes over time, and the varying densities that contributed to the formidable statistics of mortality, overcrowding and poor sanitation. Irrespective of the drop in the average decennial rate of increase of population between 1811 and 1821 due to the effects of the Napoleonic Wars and recurrent epidemics, the population of all parishes increased steadily.

There was a dropping off in population increase in the city centre, in combination with more people in a consistently limited space. The Gorbals and the extensive area of the Barony parish expanded fastest with new industries and the opening up of power loom factories, dyeworks, chemical works, foundries, and railway works.

The city improvement schemes and railway building in the 1860's had the effect of forcing out residents from the old rookeries into the expanding parishes of St. George, the Barony and St. Mungo's.

Barony parish, within the Parliamentary boundary, enveloped the weaving centres of Calton and Hutcheson, the Anderston Quay and the more affluent area of Blythswood. The five central parishes Outer High, Blackfriars, St. Mary's, St. Andrews, St. Enoch's bordering the Saltmarket, Trongate, and High Street, in 1801 accounted for just over one third of the total population.

As Glasgow developed industrially, they contributed a decreasing proportion of the total proletarian population. By 1851 their share of population is only 10.6% and almost wholly lumpen-proletarian. J.C. Symons, a government commissioner, said of these areas:

"These districts (Saltmarket) contain a motley population, consisting in almost all the lowest branches of occupation, but chiefly of a community whose sole means of subsistence consists in plunder and prostitution...I have seen human degradation in some of its worst phases, both in England and abroad, but I can advisedly say that I did not believe until I visited the wynds of Glasgow that so large an amount of filth, crime, misery, and disease existed on one spot in any civilised country" 14

One important consequence of overcrowding, poor sanitation and want of ventilation, was disease and the phenomenally high crude death rate.

It became apparent to statisticians like Alexander Scot¹⁵ that the most prominent contributory factor in the death rate was not density of population per acre,

although this was bad, but how many people were stowed into one room. In 1861 the whole city totalled, on average, 2.05 persons per room. In Bridgeton it was as high as 2.68 persons. Paisley matched Glasgow with a population of 2.1 persons per room compared with Aberdeen's 1.5 and Edinburgh's 1.4.

William Holmes¹⁶ recommended 500-600 cubic feet as the minimum quantity of air per adult. Inspectors of English prisons recommended 1000 cubic feet, but Glasgow's ticketed houses allowed only 300 cubic feet.

"If we take five of the most densely crowded blocks, including parts of the High Street, Saltmarket and Bridgegate, we find an area of 51,350 square yards with a population of 10,104 or at the rate of 609,506 inhabitants to a square mile, in other words the population of those unfortunate districts is nearly three times as closely packed together as the inhabitants of the most crowded parts of London or Edinburgh" ¹⁷

Lack of adequate transport facilities, the need for living near places of employment, contributed to overbuilding of sites and overcrowding in houses, while the absence of any effective system of refuse removal led to the pollution of water supplies, and gross surface impurity in the neighbourhood of the houses.

The habitation of a woman George Bell discovered in an Edinburgh wynd could not have been unlike Glasgow;

"What an abode! It is hardly six feet square, has no fireplace and is lighted by a small skylight. The floor is full of holes and the walls are creviced and altogether it is such a place as an owl might inhabit for the sake of the mice or other prey which have a domiciliary interest in the tenement" ¹⁸

He calculated the cubic space for each within the wynd to be $188\frac{1}{2}$ cubic feet. Even prison cells did not contain less than 800 cubic feet. No wonder he said;

"Education, secular and religious has been allowed to drop half a century behind the population" 19

J.C. Symons noted earlier;

"Asking some children in one of the rooms of the wynds in which they swarmed in Glasgow what were their names, they hesitated to answer. The superintendent of police remarked - they really have no names. Within this range of buildings, I have no doubt I should be able to find a thousand children who have no names whatever, or only nicknames like dogs" 20

The cumulative effects of these social conditions over two generations were recorded in a report of an inquiry into the physique of Glasgow school children drawn up by A.K. Chalmers, medical officer of health, in 1904. A total of 750 pupils were examined. It was discovered that high school boys were heavier and taller at most ages, while those pupils from one room houses had the lowest height and body weight. Boys and girls from one room houses also figured worse on indices of mental capacity.

The physical consequences of a century of overcrowding and congestion could be measured by those registered medically unfit for war service in 1914. In other ways conditions were educationally debilitating, as lack of privacy, shortage of light, and weak health made education run a poor second to survival. With mortality for all sections of the people at a staggering figure, it is a wonder they had time for school at all.

c) Mortality & Sanitation

Class mortality statistics are not only important for an assessment of the mean duration of life, but put vague notions of formal education into a meaningful context. Persons imminently aware of the proximity of death would have a distinct scale of preferences about what it is necessary to do while they are alive. A short life span means education is a luxury, educational institutions then serve only a limited function, say for producing a certain number of actively productive workers who have a given length of productive life. A higher mean duration of life enables a more planned approach to one's future.

Often a far greater influence on mortality than social class was occupation. Thus the mortality of a gardener may be the same as a clergyman.²¹ Poverty and hard work do not necessarily kill, only when poverty and hardship were accompanied by dirty houses, and impure air was premature death common. Yet mortality was so high in childhood that expectation of life was considerably greater at ten years of age than at birth. As death rates in children (governed by housing) accounted for a large proportion of variations in class mortality, age distribution in different classes of society grew in importance. "Risk of death from all causes taken together is much greater for children under five than adults"²²

Life tables for the working classes are largely non-existent and at best inadequate,²³ but James Stark, an Edinburgh physician, enquiring into the state of Scotland in 1851, drew up a diagram of the curves of mortality in Edinburgh of three classes of society.²⁴ Apparently, the lower classes had a greater likelihood of dying before their thirtieth birthday than a member of the gentry. As many died during the first year of life among the artisan and labour classes as during the first four years of life of the merchant class, or the first twenty years of the highest class.

In addition they also show that the lower the average duration of life in a class the greater was the number of individual cases obtaining old age. The comparison of the tables of mortality among the three classes of society, with that exhibiting the mean mortality of the whole population, renders it apparent that Stark's first and second classes of Edinburgh society are pre-eminently healthy, and that the whole excess of mortality is confined to the artisan and labouring classes. James Stark further calculated that Glasgow had the highest mortality under five in every hundred deaths at all ages.²⁵

Not only is there a difference in mortality between towns whose health is notoriously at variance, but still more striking is the comparative mortality among different classes of society in the same town. Among

the higher ranks most of the children are reared. Among the lower classes, more than a half died before they attained their fifteenth year, and in unhealthy towns;

"...one half of all who are born to the lower classes are cut off before they reach their fifth year" 26

Glasgow had a notoriously high death rate.²⁷ Even in years of mean mortality, the population died at a high rate of one annually out of every thirty four persons. Compared with English cities, Glasgow ranked second only to Liverpool in rate of mortality and density of population.²⁸ But mortality rates for Glasgow as a whole mask the essential differences between districts.

The intensity of mortality was at its peak in the Inner High district of Glasgow and at its lowest in the more healthy squares of Blythwood.²⁹ The overall decline in mortality in the 1870's can be attributed to the 1866 City Improvement Act which heralded the emergence of the population from the yoke of epidemic disease, virulent more than fifty years earlier during the most intensive period of industrial mobilisation. Apart from an illustrated exercise in survival, what meaning have these appalling statistics?

Interlinked with population density and housing conditions, mortality rates were the parameters of social existence with which the educational missionaries worked. Sunday and mission schools which tapped the

worst areas of Blackfriars, St. Mary's and the Outer High parishes of Glasgow, were thwarted in their task by the sheer weight of social circumstances. When one half of the working class population died before the age of seventeen years, education remained a matter of saving souls or preparing children for death. There was little conception of an educational ladder for these people, and in the majority of cases, they lived and died a life that was undocumented. In more than one sense without state aid, they were born to fail.

A fatal mistake must not, however, be made in portraying the circumstances of people living in intolerable slum conditions as representative of their whole class. Among artisans and skilled workers obviously factors such as overcrowding and disease imposed a less daunting problem. They were much more likely to be in fairly regular employment, to belong to a number of reforming or mutual improvement societies, and reinforce themselves against adverse conditions with self help agencies and steady incomes. We can safely say that the best that the educational system offered was at the disposal of this group.

In one sense then, the educational attainments of the regularly employed depended largely on their hours of enforced labour, and the residue of their income that could be used for either self-education, or education of their children. In varying degrees the skilled workers would have the educational motivation or

opportunity, but in total, the degree to which a group of workers can appropriate education depends on the length of the working day and their income.

d) Hours of Labour and Wages

Accurate statistics of wages are notoriously difficult to find.³⁰ Victorian statisticians usually computed average earnings, making little distinction between wage rates and earnings. Any effective comparison of wages over differences in time and space is recognised as one of the most difficult problems of economics. As a guide to standard of life, monetary wages are vitiated by fluctuations in purchasing power, by varying composition of the standard, and by the existence of net advantages or disadvantages.

In real terms the cost of education as embodied in school fees of between 1d and 4d per week, represents for the individual worker a compilation to be considered in the cost of living. When the prices of basic foodstuffs rose, or the labour of young children was unproductive, there were more mouths to feed. Given stable levels of employment even a skilled worker could just manage to keep his children at school. When he walked on a tightrope between affluence and poverty, education was the last thing considered and the first surrendered. The opportunity cost of education (or alternative surrendered) for a worker's child was the extra food to be purchased in its place. Obviously educationally

enlightened parents sacrificed, but given economic necessities and changes in productiveness of child labour, there was little incentive even at the best of times.

Prices rose rapidly between 1790 and 1820, fell from 1820-1850, rose from 1850-1873, and fell again from 1873-1893;³¹ assuming that wages remained at their inflationary level, when prices fell, more money was used for luxuries. Even then the concept of increased demand for education during periods of affluence is only a hypothetical judgement.

John Burnett gives a typical budget of a semi-skilled worker in 1841, in regular employment earning 15/- to 20/- per week with a family of three children;³²

5-4lb loaves @ 8½d	3s.6d.
5lb meat @ 5d	2s.1d.
7 pts porter @ 2d	1s.2d.
½ cwt coal	9½d.
40lb potatoes	1s.4d.
3oz tea, 1-lb sugar	1s.6d.
1-lb butter	9d.
½-lb soap, ½-lb candles	6½d.
Rent	2s.6d.
Schooling	4d.
Sundries	5½d.
Total	<u>15/-</u>

The 2/6d for rent probably provided two rooms and 4d for schooling would pay for two children at a dame or adventure school where they might learn the rudiments of

reading and perhaps number. The 'comfort line' came at something over £1 week depending on the size of the family. Unfortunately, food takes 72% of income.

It must be understood that with wide variations of actual wage, there was no typical working class wage or pattern of consumption. Supposing a worker on this income sacrificed for the education of his children, he would certainly be within Seebohm Rowntree's definition of 'secondary poverty' - where earnings are sufficient to maintain physical efficiency had not a proportion of them gone in either 'legitimate' (e.g. medical expenses, education), or 'illegitimate' directions (e.g. drink, gambling). If Glasgow is comparable with the Oldham of John Foster's 1840's study, only 15% of the labour force can have been above Rowntree's primary poverty line.³³

Many of the town dwellers in Glasgow were semi-skilled and unskilled casual workers, frequently unemployed, or open air workers who were obliged to be idle during the year. Charles Booth discovered in the 1880's that one third of Londoners were living in primary poverty, so we are safe to assume that before 1850 in Glasgow, it may have been as high as 50 to 75%.

Inflation was not the only factor which required readjustment in a worker's lifestyle; the effect of continuing industrialisation was to make important shifts between skilled, less skilled, and unskilled labour,

promoting some into machine minders and downgrading others. It was in the unrevolutionised trades that the lowest earnings and the greatest poverty lay; among the unskilled urban occupations like labouring, portering and navying, where work was often casual and seasonal; and among numerous hand trades in competition with factory production. The descent of the hand-loom weaver from prosperity to pauperism within half a century is a well known example of this process. At the beginning of the century before the adoption of power looms, they were the aristocrats of labour with wages of 30/- to 35/- per week. By the 1830's as mechanical weaving took over, they were reduced to a starvation wage of 1d an hour or 6/- per week for 72 hours. In a closely allied occupation - the 'sweated trades' - there remained a substantial body of outworkers, mostly women working at ready-made tailoring, shirt-making, and box-making.

A handloom weaver still had the satisfaction of looking down at the labourer for the lowest earnings of any large body of adult male workers in the century were found among agricultural labourers³⁴ who, despite a reduction in numbers, remained one of the largest occupational groups throughout the period. Female field labourers, numerous in every town in Scotland, when employed earned only 8d per day and ceased to be fit for work about the age of 50. "The fact is they live in a condition to which that of most domestic animals is a luxury"³⁵

In the middle of the century the ratio between skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled labour in England stood at about 5, 3.3, 2.4³⁶ putting the actual earning of the semi-skilled at between £40-£52 per year. Some were workers in old, established trades like building, mining and quarrying, others were new, public service occupations like policemen and postmen.

Characteristically, the semi-skilled were the machine operators in the factories called into existence by the industrial revolution. To this extent they represented a largely new and highly significant element in the structure of the working class. Where formerly there had existed virtually only skilled and unskilled men with little possibility of movement between them, the semi-skilled represent that third of the working class whose earnings were just about sufficient for subsistence, in contrast to the other third plunged into extreme misery and hovering at the verge of actual starvation. Their relative advantage compared with other occupational groups gave them a stake in the social system. They were in the ranks of the expanding factory proletariat helping to identify with the New Model unionism in the third quarter of the nineteenth century and probably supporting the Liberal party against the Tories. They were to be wooed by educational reformists in the name of national education although reformists' original sentiments had originated among the sunken hoards occupying the slums; the school

boards with their middle mindedness and mediocrity of intention were tailormade for them.

It is possible to draw up a league table of occupations and weekly income that will later give some credibility to the idea that the better off occupational groups were over-represented in better schools.

A vigilant clergyman in the Blackfriars College parish laboriously collected wage statistics which he submitted to the government enquiry into religious instruction and education of 1836. This is presented in the form of a schedule giving comprehensive wage statistics for men and women.³⁷ Lads and girls were less well annotated.

It is not a representative sample for the whole of Glasgow because it relates to one of the poorer parishes, but reflects the general low income levels of the majority of occupations. The privilege occupations, those which Victorians fashionably called 'respectable artisans'; engineers, cotton spinners, millwrights, engravers, power loom weavers, plumbers, printers etc., had weekly incomes of over 20/- per week. This is the average, but wages of over 30/- would not have been unknown. The greatest cluster of occupations - over 50% - fall within the 15/- to 20/- weekly income range. Outdoor labourers and gardeners had only just more income than the handloom weaver whose circumstances were critical.

The social effect on those whose incomes are lower than 15/- was observed by Henry Littlejohn, medical officer of health for Edinburgh, in an investigation of the wynds of the city.³⁸ Of a population in 15 courts, comprising 480 heads of families and a total of 809 adults, the average rate of wages for men was 12/6 per week, for women, if they worked, 3/2d, for children 2/10d. Of 663 children under 15, 254 were at school. He classified only 30% of the heads of families as poor, although about 40% were in permanent work, and almost 50% were idle or casual workers. Such poverty, partial employment and low incomes, even with gratis education by charitable organisations, meant barely one third of the eligible children had some chance of schooling.

Similar importance must be attached to hours of labour. In one sense, the political struggle for the shortening of the working day was inseparably linked with education. Where the level of wages reflected the parents' ability to pay for the education of their children and the attraction of exploiting the childrens' labour, an overall reduction in hours was most beneficial for the education of adults as well as young workers.

With toil of between 12-14 hours a day, there was seldom opportunity for enjoying rational amusement or the cultivation of the mind. It is not surprising that the most radical and unionised sectors of labour saw the path to educational advance in the struggle for the

normal working day. A modern writer W.H. Marwick observes that;³⁹ "In the 30's, working hours averaged 70 per week (for weavers) including 5-10 hours on Saturday" Miners in the Lothians around 1840 worked a 5 day week, an 8-12 hour day being normal. A twelve hour day and Sunday labour associated with a double shift system persisted in the iron and steel trades until 1919. Before 1867, bricklayers worked 60 hours per week until 1864, then got the half-day Saturday. But the most iniquitous workload was on the railways, especially the North British. Two and a half percent of the men worked over 18 hours per day, 14% over 12 hours. Only in the decade 1845-55 did the ordinary working week fall from 69 to 60 hours.

In coal mining, the day started at 5 a.m. consequently,

"The miner holds a humble position in the industrial ranks. His occupation does not require much skill, nor has it any tendency to incite him to intellectual pursuits" 40

Even though strenuous labour was likely to put workers in the aristocracy of labour with regard to income, it denied them the academic credentials resulting from shorter hours. In the iron industry the work was particularly severe;

"When their day's work or night's work is done, they are too much exhausted to devote attention to anything of the nature of mental culture so they are not so well informed nor intelligent as the average worker engaged in other occupations" 41

Gradually legislative controls on the absolute increase in hours forced employers to resort to the more dubious alternative of increasing productivity e.g. increasing relative surplus value - by piecework. David Bremner in 1867 noted that piecework was in operation at the railway yards at Cowlairs, in the coachmaking industry and in the iron trade, with so much paid per ton produced. What was gained in the shortening of hours was quickly lost in the increased intensity of labour, exhaustion, and poor physique of children.

When hours and wages varied between industries and between districts, only skilled tradesmen earned a sufficient income to afford luxuries, provided their families were not large. The ability to pay school pence provided the economically imposed limit to the school curriculum; the efficiency of education then could only be measured in terms of its productive use. This was the demand side of the formal education equation. There was a wage contradiction; as wages rose and there was greater opportunity for child labour, education competed with the incentive to work; alternatively as incomes fell there was less money for education and more reason for children to work. The Factory Acts against child labour did not put an end completely to this state of affairs.

Although by 1870 the average earnings of adults had risen by one third in twenty years, little reward

resulted from reducing the hours of labour, as the phenomenon up to 1850 of absolute increases in labour time, was replaced after 1850 by increasing intensity of labour, and decreasing wages per amount produced.⁴²

e) The Case of the Hand-Loom Weaver

These conclusions do not explain a whole generational experience of one occupation group. The decline of the Scottish hand-loom weaver in income and status during the period 1800-1850 is a good example of such a process. They are important because they figure largely in working class educational folklore, and their changing fortunes illustrate how material conditions, notably poverty, affected educational opportunity and aspirations.

A singular and perfect metamorphosis came over the hand-loom weaver in the forty years 1800-1840 "From 1785 to 1806, hand loom weaving was the best trade going and... in no other were wages so high"⁴³ Any of the more skilled weavers could easily earn from 30/- to 40/- for a 4-5 day week of approximately 12 hours. They were noted for their high character and learning, often they rested a book upon their looms while they worked.⁴⁴

The weavers maintained this ascendancy with some slight exceptions until the peace of 1815, when they experienced a sudden depression and continued to sink below other trades, until they completed their fall from the highest to the lowest of all. Only the occupants of the wynds were worse off, and this was

when hand-loom weavers formed, occupationally, one eighth of the total English population and one thirtieth of the Scottish.⁴⁵ In 1838 on average, they worked 74 hours for one fifth of their 1806 income, in so doing sacrificing their health; "The physical condition of other classes is greatly superior to that of the hand-loom weavers"⁴⁶

Fifty two per cent of looms in the trade were cotton looms and concentrated in the west of Scotland. In Glasgow with just under 50% of looms worked by women and children, more than half the cotton weavers were engaged in the worst paid work when wages were falling.

The advent of the power loom and the overstocking of the trade with Irish settlers, encouraged by cheap steamship fares, ruined the trade. Hand-loom weaving was easy to learn, not heavy, required no capital, no apprenticeship and no entry fee, hence wages were driven below the point at which machinery could compete with hand-labour. Unfortunately, the competition of labour with labour prolonged the decline of the weaving industry.

In no other trade was it possible for children to make a comparative wage so young. Some children were not permanent weavers but were put into it by parents until they were old enough and strong enough to take up the father's trade. The 1833 Factory Act which prohibited labour of children under nine years in textile factories, strengthened the tendency to employ young

children in weaving and other domestic industry. A result of impoverishment was the sight of a Glasgow weaver sending his son and daughter to a power-loom factory to supplement the family income.

The consequence of the trade decline was to divide the weavers into two groups, demarcated by age - the oldest were the most diligent and intelligent, the younger were an inferior body of men;

"The income which formerly raised them as high, if not higher in social rank than any other class of Scottish artisans, is gone from them, but the intelligence and education which enhanced their prosperity remains now to embitter their poverty, the case is far less painful for the younger generation who have been for the most part accustomed to but little ... and whose tone of mind and scale of education render the evils of a low physical condition less grievous and galling" 47

Former habits of regular churchgoing disappeared for want of clothing. Book societies formerly supported by themselves alone were in decline;

"Newspapers, magazines, reviews, histories, travels and books on science and philosophy are well nigh excluded from their dwellings, where of all other they were the most frequently found" 48

Such was the extent of deterioration in fortune. Worst of all their children's education suffered;

"The weavers too have fallen lamentably off in seeing a competent education to themselves and family. This I know from experience having been thirty years a teacher" 49

Commissionary Symons reported that three quarters of the children were growing up if not totally without education, at least receiving it so deficiently as to

be of no use to them in later life.⁵⁰ The age at which weavers' children attended week-day school was usually between 7 and 10 at which age their labour was available to their parents and their education generally terminated. Only in woollen and some linen districts where the parents had the means, were the children far better educated and these more often than not at Sabbath Schools.

The extent of the weavers' distress proved what was summed up best by the commissioners;

"...among bodies of artisans inhabiting the same district and surrounded by the same degree of civilisation, the same means of instruction, it is perhaps more probably that pecuniary distress or what is more mischievous, great and sudden alterations of prosperity and adversity, will produce low moral conditions than that a low moral condition will occasion pecuniary distress" 51

Proof II - The Statistical Evidence on Education

Prior to the Argyll Commission's report in the 1860's, parliamentary reports and papers dealing with education were too weighty on the side of general statistics for Scotland to deal in detail with the individual cities, or conduct a local census. In 1835, astonished and waking up to the realities of city life, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland sought to procure an account of the actual state of education in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Greenock, Paisley, Perth and Dundee.⁵² Some preliminary work was done on the educational provision of five parishes in Glasgow but this was incidental and unsystematic.

For Edinburgh, there was even less information. A committee had been established in 1820 to found schools on the principle of 'locality' and parishes were sub-divided into districts which visitors then investigated, noting names, occupations, church and school attendance and literacy.⁵³ Regrettably, this survey is lost without trace. Not until the Glasgow Council sponsored a survey in 1846 do we have adequate statistical indication of the cumulative impact on education of the social circumstances outlined in this chapter.

a) The Education Surveys

By the 1830's we have a pattern emerging of stratified educational provision to cope with the different social and educational demands of the city population. A relatively new institution, the sessional school had come into existence, to accompany a motley assemblage of adventure schools and subscription schools.

The adventure school, the oldest type, was maintained wholly upon the wages or fees paid by pupils, weekly, monthly or quarterly, representing the simple case of the exchange of labour for its value. Often it embodied piece-rates viz. so much was charged by the hour for subjects taught and where recompense was small, the time and labour of the proprietor was given over to other occupations. These establishments came under continual attack by inspectors of schools for their inefficiency, poor accommodation, and the 'parking place' mentality of

the parents who used them to mind their children while at work.

Securer foundations were provided by privately endowed schools, or charity schools, in certain localities. Often the funds were mortified by benevolent individuals who wished to establish a school as a charity for the poor and deserving,⁵⁴ and in many cases where money accumulated more schools were opened. Where a permanent endowment was wanting, attempts to lessen the dependence of the teacher on school wages resulted in a subscription school. The process was simple but effective. By subscribing a certain amount, or assigning it to him, either in lieu or in augmentation of an endowment arising from other sources, the teacher was guaranteed some respite from sheer want. Landowners, the church, manufacturers, owners of mines, other such proprietors or the working class themselves could thus set up a school.

Not until the government grants were firmly established in the 1840's was any clear standard set upon these establishments. Prior to this, teachers depended upon the pittance provided by benefactors which lessened the professional nature of school teaching into a species of by-employment.

Squeezed between the adventure and subscription school, evolved the mission or ragged school, noted for its short life and hoards of irregular attenders. In

point of management they differed little from sessional schools, but in place of a kirk session they had a missionary committee, and instead of a body exercising territorial authority, they had congregational action directed by the committee.

But pride of place was reserved for the new sessional schools, often referred to as the parochial school of the city. Kirk sessions granted from their ordinary funds arising from church collectors or casual mortifications, allowances of fixed or variable amounts as a salary, with a view to rendering practicable a reduction in fees to make the school easily accessible to all. In this way they could assimilate as far as possible sessional schools to the parochial model while making education a part of the ecclesiastical economy of each parish. Even so, a teacher had in many instances to provide accommodation, a school room and dwelling house for themselves; in other cases a free school room was the only advantage possessed. They were a world apart from initial intentions that were often high-sounding and idealistic. The seal of cause and charter of erection of the sessional school erected in St. George's parish in Edinburgh in 1829 bears the sentiment;

"...may be safely and beneficially entrusted with a much more liberal course of instruction than what children of our population usually enjoy... for elevating the tone of their disposition and securing the improvement of character" 55

In more realistic circumstances many took on the role of ragged schools depending on the character of specific districts in which they were grounded. John Wood's sessional school, erected in Edinburgh in 1813 was the outcome of riots that occurred in the town on January 1st 1812.⁵⁶

With a view to civilising the populace, a teacher was appointed by the kirk session and paid for by church contribution,⁵⁷ and the first school was opened in Leith Wynd. In 1819 John Wood, Sheriff of Peebles, came to the school and some five years later a £1,000 building in Market Street became its new headquarters.

An indication of public contentment with sessional schooling emerged when John Wood's school gained a national reputation. In fact, Wood's rational method of education and belief in education of the intellectual kind was to supersede the Madras system, and with David Stow's training system became the blueprint for all sessional schools. Even schools for the privileged like Edinburgh Academy and George Heriot's School absorbed the ethics of Wood.

Soon the idea of congregations establishing schools spread to other towns and parishes. Thomas Chalmers' school was erected in MacFarlane Street, Glasgow in 1820, and with General Assembly support and government grants, various schemes made considerable headway. The Free Church after 1843 tried to assimilate as far as possible the sessional school to the parochial school of the

national establishment, with the ingredient of local responsibility and devolution of authority characteristic of Scottish church government.

Essentially all schools were of two types, those with fees paid quarterly, thereby attracting tradespeople and shopkeepers, and those paid weekly to be of special interest to the poor, with their fees paid by the parochial board. Superintendence in the case of girls' schools was the responsibility of ladies' committees who had an active interest in the girls' industry and the supply and disposal of materials. Sessions or congregations frequently appointed a master, provided accommodation and laid down conditions of employment. Only one bequest, that of Dr. A. Bell, was administered individually by the Town Council.

Religious minorities like the Roman Catholics, although catered for separately, often found themselves willing recipients of protestant mission school education in their own districts. In October 1817 Kirkman Finlay, a member of parliament for the city, set up the Catholic School Society for the education of Catholic children. By 1819 the Society was educating some 1,000 children in three separate schools,⁵⁸ but support became insufficient as subscriptions altered with the trade cycle. Not until 1847 when the Catholic Poor School Committee was set up in England did the Scottish Society receive moral support from a body which could treat with the government for a share of the education grant.

The first statistical summary of Glasgow schools was made by James Cleland in 1816⁵⁹ but;

"As it might be thought invidious and eventually prove hurtful to some of the teachers, were the number of pupils who attend every individual school and the various stipulated fees made the subject of comparison" 60

an average was calculated. He admitted that there could be some discrepancy in calculation but arrived at a figure of 144 schools and teachers; an average of 52 scholars for each, making a total population of 7,488 with an extra 3,563 in charity or free schools.⁶¹ The University, Andersonian Institution and Grammar School catered for another 2,795. Within the Royalty and including Sunday Schools, the Digest of Parochial returns in 1818⁶² recorded a similar total of 11,007 at school.

When fourteen years later a summary of educational returns was conducted⁶³ only 7,109 scholars were entered as attending at parochial (sessional) schools and non parochial establishments, with 7,337 in the Barony and Gorbals.⁶⁴ Because the return was made by ministers, often with little knowledge of actual conditions, this figure can be considered as an underestimate. A more realistic account and breakdown of schools into groups was conducted by schoolmasters themselves,⁶⁵ at the request of a Select Committee on Education.

What was interesting about the replies was the breakdown of schools into groups. Of 10,600 scholars noted,⁶⁶ 4,365 or 41% had fees low enough or intention specific enough to attract the working class below the

tradesmen level; 2,313 or 21% were in sessional schools for the offspring of tradesmen, mechanics or shopkeepers, and 3,922 or 37% were in commercial academies, charging high fees and mainly recruiting into the white collar class. An upsurge in school building during the 1820's and 30's was mainly the result of provisions made for this latter group.⁶⁷

At the maximum 12,000 children were at school, a figure that would give a proportion of approximately 20 to 25% of the age group,⁶⁸ and a record of stagnation since the early 1820's. Many ephemeral schools must have been left out of account, but if the statistics are representative of the true position, Glasgow's industrial population stagnated educationally between 1815 and 1840, to experience a partial 'take-off' as late as 1850. Understandably, day schools could barely keep pace with population while Sunday Schools and other less secure bodies had the unenviable task of stepping into the breach. Thus optimism about rising voluntary provision in Scotland and the building of social overhead capital after the Napoleonic wars⁶⁹ was confounded by the changing character of cities.

Before more detailed inquiry into Glasgow schooling, a word of explanation about the way the statistics are framed.

The principal use of an analysis of the scholars according to their age, is to acquire the means of estimating the relative proportions of instructed and uninstructed in the youthful portion of the population,

but no estimate of this kind can be said to be correctly framed. As children, until they have attained the age of two or three years, are not subjects of school tuition of any kind, whilst the population census includes those of all ages, no useful comparison can be made between the number of children under five years of age at school and their proportion in the whole population. From the uncertainty also of the termination of the period of tuition at the other end of the scale, it is almost useless to compare the number of scholars above fifteen years old with the proportion of the whole population above the same age. With respect to the scholars between five and fifteen, a comparison of this sort has been drawn.

There is an obvious fallacy of procedure which vitiates the conclusions. It is implied (though not so expressed) that because the number of children between the ages of five and fifteen under instruction at any one time falls considerably short of the whole number of children between those ages, the residue or supplementary number are at the same moment altogether uninstructed. But we must consider that very few children indeed are scholars for a continuous period of ten or even five years⁷⁰ and that out of the number appearing at any given time to be 'without instruction' because not then actually at school, there may be a large proportion who have had more or less instruction

but have been called from school to labour of various kinds before attaining the age of fifteen and thus are returned as 'non instructed'. The only mode of really arriving at the number in any district who are 'without instruction whatsoever' would be to obtain returns of the number under instruction according to their several ages from year to year, between five and fifteen, and then to compare the results with the numbers of the same ages in the whole population at the same time. Even in this way, some children would appear as 'uninstructed' who get a little schooling from time to time with intervals of labour but these exceptions would not be of importance. Because no such statistical facilities are available, however imperfect, we must use the whole age range.

Bearing these reservations in mind a look first at small area studies. In fact investigations of small areas add greatly to our knowledge of sub-districts and the effects of cycles of deprivation and accumulated social disadvantages upon educational take-up.

The first small area census was made by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1835.⁷¹ For a population of 40,815 there existed 56 schools. Adventure schools almost outnumber all others, but surprisingly the parochial schools, or more aptly session schools, took in 1,822 pupils, just under one half. It is highly likely that children in these

superior establishments came from some distance outside the parishes to get the benefit of the standards.

Because no migration figures are available, perhaps it would not be an over-estimation to assume that half the parochial school children commuted in this way, leaving a schooled population of between 38% and 47%.⁷²

As a percentage of the total population it amounts to somewhere between one eighth and one fifteenth.

A further statement by the General Assembly Education Committee documented worse results.⁷³ In St. Luke's parish, Glasgow, a survey by the parochial society revealed that only 18% of the children of 6-13 years were at school.⁷⁴ Calton had one seventeenth of its population at school and the Outer High parish one twelfth.⁷⁵ In a quarter of the whole of Glasgow only one fifteenth were school attenders. Frank observations by city missionaries in Greyfriars parish ten years later⁷⁶ saw little arrestment to the stagnating conditions.

It was not surprising that changing fortunes in city life prompted the Town Council under the authority of Dr. Watt, the city statistician, to secure a return of the education in the city. A grant of £100 was donated for the purpose⁷⁷ and the flourishing Sabbath School union members acted as enumerators. It is testimony to the size and influence of the Sabbath School organisation that a survey was conducted and subsequently published in 1846 of the whole of Glasgow.

The abstracts of the survey in the appendix⁷⁸ document the five districts of the Sabbath School union and also the seven sub-districts within these boundaries.

The conclusions cover all classes of children, and give the number of children registered at week-day schools, but not actual attenders or the nature of accommodation, therefore the statistics will be slightly optimistic;

- a) 45% of eligible children between 6 and 16 years were at school (Diagram 1, Column 2B) or 1 in 12 of the population. Of course sub-district 5, a poor area, shows only an attendance of 33%⁷⁹ (Diagram 2, Column 2A).
- b) The Western District Union embracing the wealthiest areas have, as would be expected, a higher proportionate attendance of over 50%.
- c) Almost 50% of children attend Sunday School, the percentage increasing in the poorer sub-districts (Diagram 2, Column 5A).
- d) The week-day school attendance of children was pathetically low, varying enormously between districts, even streets, and poor children had a 1 in 3 chance of attending school at some time in their lives.

Understandably, the sub-districts show statistics worse in many respects, being particularly good examples of the proletariat sub-stratum. Note also that fewer girls attended school than boys.

Once the ball had been set rolling by the Sabbath School teachers the statistical movement gathered momentum. The debate on national education and the rivalries within the church for the prerogative in educational administration, filled the 1850's with theories and counter-theories on the state of educational provision in Scotland's towns, especially the adequacy and inadequacy of schools and the amount of educational destitution.⁸⁰ Reformists maintained that there were not enough schools, while the opposition replied that the amount of school accommodation was greater than parents were willing to avail themselves of, and though children were not attending, the evil they believed could not be remedied by an educational bill or other than voluntary means.

In reply to these objections Robert Somers the editor of the North British Daily Mail conducted his own survey⁸¹ through the summer of 1857, concentrating attention on schools and scholars, and the state of school rooms and apparatus. He criticised the 1851 census for having only approximate figures and exaggerating the number of scholars, and doubted whether such schools were permanent.⁸² In any case, the government investigation had been concluded in one day, thereby giving a favourable view of the amount of instruction.

Somers conducted his survey with the aid of

reporters over a number of months. He found two thirds of day scholars were under 10 years of age, while the average length of attendance at school ranged from one and a half years in the missionary and poorer schools, to four and a half years in the schools attended by the middle and the upper working class. In total most children attending school received less than three years of full time education.

Somers's census documents similar results to that produced by the Sabbath School teachers.⁸³ The last two columns exhibit greater difference of school attendance in the various quarters of the cities than is imaginable.

A misunderstanding may lurk in these startling results. It must not be concluded for example that because the number of scholars in St. Andrew's parish is 1 in 704 of the population with an attendance of 70% of eligible children, that the parish is a model of diffused education, nor that the Tron is so awfully and transcendently bad as that only 1 in 33.9% of its population is at school, for in point of fact, a large number of Tron children were drawn into Catholic schools and others in St. Andrews's.⁸⁴

Unfortunately, all the statistics of locality do not take into account the fact that those educated in one parish often belonged to another. Still, the Tron was without doubt very low in education. Furthermore as the population had increased since 1851 much more in some districts than others, the statistics were slightly out of date.

Apart from these provisos, the Appendix Table gives a strong, broad and accurate statement of the state of education in the various parishes and districts. The 1 in 18.6 of Blackfriars, the 1 in 17.1 of the Outer High or St. Pauls, and the 1 in 33.9 of the Tron brings to light at once the parish population of the city - the downfallen and downtrodden, and the dense labouring masses who were negligent of the education of their children. Parental negligence was important, as without parental support, no amount of reform could seduce the young from other interests. The 1 in 18.03 of Calton and the 1 in 22.08 of Bridgeton are graphic expressions of the lamentable desertion of schools which became a habit among the factory population and of the failure of the Factory Education Acts.

The proportion of day scholars in the whole city to the population as returned in 1851, Somers estimates as 1 in 11.7;

"...a paucity of school attendance without a parallel in any town in Scotland, not more than one half of what has been attained in many despotic countries in Europe and than which there is nothing worse now probably in the Christian World" 85

If we update the proportion of day scholars to population for the year 1857, we find a worse figure of 1 in 13 attending school (column 7).

It is tempting to compare these figures with the Argyll report findings on Glasgow⁸⁶ which, unlike Somers' census used 10 regional districts. Here also 1 in 11.1 of the population were at school, with 38.6 of eligible children age 5 to 15 years at school.

The three censuses 1846, 1857 and 1867 can be compared if we give an approximate figure for the number of children 5-15 years at the time of the Argyll report. Similarly, approximate figures can be updated for 1857 and for 1846.⁸⁷ A startling result is observable.

In twenty years, at the peak of voluntary effort of charity education in the city of Glasgow, the proportion of scholars to population was approximately 1 in 13 and the proportion of children educated of their total age group was 36.6% in 1846, 38.6% (Table 3 (XIX) Column 5) in 1857, and remained at 38.6% (Table 3 (XX) Column 5) in 1867. In other words in an industrial city all attempts to educate children by non-compulsory means proved a failure. The church, the government, and philanthropic bodies ran hard to stand still. Although the percentage of school children from the 1840's-1890's rarely rose above the mean 22%⁸⁸ of the total city population, the absolute increase in the size of the population and the consequent educational problems were met with only mild resistance and voluntary agencies were barely able, or interested enough, to cope with rising numbers.

Fear of the literate masses was one of the major reasons for institutional reform, but early pioneers were without the financial resources, and government contributions were meagre. In fact, these educational censuses were an indictment of the voluntary principle in education. They would have confirmed the worst fears

of George Lewis;

"To wait until the ignorant desire instruction and the vicious desire their own reformation is to wait until incorruption shall arise out of corruption and life out of death"... "Voluntary system... gives to those whom providence has blessed with abundance a monopoly of the best school masters for the education of their children and leaves the poor man nothing but the dregs" 89

The number of children of five and under ten years of age in Glasgow in 1857 was in the proportion of about 1 in 10 of the whole population. Only 1 in 14 being at school, the number of children of this period of life consequently outnumber those who received education. Approximately 46,000 children between 5 and 15 years were without schooling.⁹⁰ This vast proportion - larger than the whole number of children of five and under ten - did not remain the course wholly without schooling; some may have attained their year, or year and a half, others would have attended for some shorter period, the great majority doubtless picked up some scrap of instruction.

The number of children who grew up without any day school instruction whatever is not easy to establish. If each child attended exactly three years at school, the education of the whole juvenile population to that extent would be consistent with the fact that only 1 in 3 of the children of 5 and under 15 years attended school at one period, because from 5-15 years there are 3 x 3 years. For every boy or girl who attends three years and upwards at school, there are at least two who

attend less than three years; so that the existence of a numerous uninstructed class and of a class who give a fluctuating attendance of a few months only at school has been shown to be certain and absolute.

Giving a specific proportion of attenders in any year is too limiting and final. If with the three censuses we account for the difference between those on the roll and those in actual attendance as 80%, then an upper and lower limit of school population can be drawn. Combined with new limits the number actually employed in Glasgow may be added to reveal the number unoccupied.⁹¹ The results are;

	<u>1846</u>	<u>1857</u>	<u>1867</u>
At school	36.6-45.7%	38.3-48%	38.6-45%
Employed	14%	13.5%	13%
Unoccupied or Unemployed	40.3-49.4%	38.5-48.2%	42-48%

Further figures for the three decennial censuses show the rapid increase in schooling after 1871;

	<u>1871</u>	<u>1881</u>	<u>1891</u>
At School	49-60%	59-70%	65-74%
Employed	13%	9.8%	10.4%
Unoccupied or Unemployed	27-38%	20-31%	16-24%

These statistics are from attendance censuses embodied in the printed census data, not school board returns. By 1891, probably 90% of children 5-13 years were at school. The statistic of 65-74% above stipulates an age range that compulsory education did not legislate for until 1918.

b) Schools and Their Efficiency

Robert Somers discovered 213 day schools on his journey, with a population of 28,463 scholars and 665 teachers.⁹² The sessional schools of which there were often more than one in each parish were lucky if they had government assistance, or £30 upwards a year through the Town Clerk from Dr. Bell's bequest.⁹³

"The sessional schools on the whole are very creditable common schools and supply a superior elementary instruction to the working and middle classes".⁹⁴

The private working class schools were principally poor adventure schools in thickly populated quarters of town, reflecting the scenes of stench and disorder;

"...outside we find a group of 11 children 6 years and upwards gathered round a heap of rotten oranges ... thrown upon an open dunghill. After questioning them round whether they have been at school to hold up their hands, and there are six; those who are not at school to hold up their hands, and there are five. The schools have it by a majority of one"⁹⁵

Amid the disorder there was little consolation from housing aided schools. Where a school was aided by public funds and a good building provided, the unintentional effect was to raise the fees to prevent overcrowding, thereby excluding the poorest and forcing them into adventure schools.

The consequence was that the widespread existence of adventure schools in a district pleased the people with the idea that the young were receiving a satisfactory education, and kept down the demand for a system that could with better devised machinery, reach the masses of the people. The number of scholars for which there

was good accommodation provided at eight square feet per head only amounted to three quarters of the whole number of school attenders. When the Argyll Commissioners made their investigation of Glasgow ten years later, the number of schools had only increased by 20 to 233, though 90% had good accommodation.⁹⁶

Discrepancies in statistical computation of children in parishes amounted to at least 10,000⁹⁷ and many were entered as day scholars who would probably only attend evening schools or Sabbath Schools;

"...the census returns indicate a better state of things than our experience confirmed" ⁹⁸

While in every district there was a surplus of accommodation compared with attendance, where the whole number of children at school were of school age the accommodation was calculated to fail to yield school room for half of those requiring it.⁹⁹

"In a sentence, while the accommodation exceeds by a trifling surplussage the number of children at school, yet were the number of children attending school who ought to be there, the supply of proper accommodation would be short of demand by 61,973 sittings, or about two thirds of the whole" ¹⁰⁰

In terms of value for money, the sessional schools apportioned a greater money value to the education of their charges than their counterparts, the mission school. An average school, St. Andrew's Sessional in the Calton, allocated £1.20s.3 $\frac{3}{4}$ d as the total cost of each child, 8/4d was provided by private benevolence, 11/4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d by the state and 10/7 $\frac{1}{4}$ d by the parents. Alternatively, Green Street Mission School in the same parish allocated only

7/11 $\frac{1}{2}$ d per child - 4/6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d of this came from charity and only 3@4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d from the parents.¹⁰¹ A breakdown of costs for all sessional and mission schools throughout the city reveals;¹⁰²

	<u>Each Child Cost Parents</u>	<u>Each Child Cost State</u>	<u>Each Child Cost Private Benevolence</u>
Sessional School	£5.0s.1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d	£3.15s.9 $\frac{1}{2}$ d	£2.19s.6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d
Mission School	£1.17s.0 $\frac{3}{4}$ d	£2.4s.2d	£3.19s.10d
	<u>Total Cost</u>		
Sessional School	£11.15s.5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.		
Mission School	£8.1s.0 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.		

Children of highly paid operatives and shopkeepers at sessional schools besides being gifted with better accommodation and apparatus were favoured with a greater yearly expenditure per head. Even if private charity were abolished, parental contribution and state aid would still keep them sufficiently well equipped to be a privileged elite above the rest in their social class. If private charity dried up, mission schools would almost cease to compete. Such dependency on charity alone (almost half of a mission school's total income compared with a quarter in the case of sessional schools) rendered schools subject to the instability of the market, or the exertions of its benefactors, when quite clearly they had a far greater problem and a greater pool of client scholars to educate.

When there was the largest infusion of children taught gratuitously and where the accommodation was bad, the schools were least satisfactory. In densely populated districts which had one good school, it was not the local children that benefited but the more motivated and less poor. All in all, the poor fared very badly.

Proof III - Comparison with England.

a) Was Scotland Unique?

Comparisons between areas, regions and cities are difficult to make for a number of reasons, especially over differences of time. The difficulty of double counting of scholars has not been entirely overcome. Many attended day schools, many went to night school as well, and some to Sunday School alone. Different census takers had different motives in collecting material, and with the most scarce of all resources, time, they frequently under - overestimated the number of schools. Lord Kerry's returns for England and Wales in 1833 are virtually useless because of the lack of distinction between those attending both day and Sunday Schools, and those who attended one type only.

The gap between enrolments and attendance was often wide, because of normal absenteeism and short stays, but these were factors unaccounted for in most cases. Nevertheless, if we are to see Scottish educational

history against the backcloth of industrialisation, some brief comparisons with conditions prevalent in England must be undertaken, to see whether Scotland and more particularly, Glasgow, was or was not unique.

During the 1830's and early 40's many statistical societies conducted exhaustive surveys of various regions, the most prominent being the Manchester Statistical Society. The results of these undertakings were published in the Journal of the Royal Statistical Society and appear in abbreviated form in an Appendix Table 3 (XXI).

Variable though they are in data, they cover a period of six years from 1835 to 1841. Some surveys actually separate Sunday Schools and evening schools from common schools, others are not so specific and therefore more inaccurate.

Industrial regions and their nucleus of cities like Leeds, Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham and Newcastle have school attendance figures in the range of 41% to 51% of children 5-15 years. Manchester is the odd one out with a much higher attendance figure of 70%, possibly resulting from another method of calculation. J.C. Symons in 1843 commenting on Sheffield conditions claimed that;

"...little more than one third of this number (16,500 working class children) viz. one only out of 2.8 attended day schools" 103

This is probably a more accurate figure.

In the Westminster district of London, one of the very poorest and based upon occupations other than industry, the figures are as low as 34.1%. Westminster exhibited all the problems of the urban environment rather than the industrial. Less industrialised cities though, like Bristol, Bury, and York, figured better in the equation of school attendances.

It appears from this brief comparison that Glasgow was on par with English towns, faring neither better nor worse in educational administration. Certainly social divisions there had been established upon the English pattern very early on and it was dealing with this situation that brought much of the Scottish practice in line with England. The social conditions of existence had somewhat equalised opportunities all round, industry acting as the great leveller of proud aspirations. Not that England coped with the situation with any greater degree of success as the government return in 1870 highlighted.¹⁰⁴ For Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester, new returns were testimony to a quarter of a century of virtual stability in education, if anything the Birmingham figures were worse.¹⁰⁵ In all cases, school attendance barely reached 50%.

Many observers blamed the state of things upon the people themselves. Accommodation in Birmingham and Leeds was above the number on the roll and well above actual attendances as it was in Glasgow. What really happened was that mediocre accommodation kept down the demand to

the available supply and with the operation of the price mechanism, rising fees in the case of improved schools virtually excluded the poorest. However the schools did not serve all that could be demanded. Insulted by inadequate facilities, most parents, not always the more respectable, would view a local school as specifically for the poor and refuse to send their children.¹⁰⁶

A large proportion of the children of clerks and shopmen who valued superior education, and yet with salaries little better than the wages of manual workmen, had a particularly tedious choice. They had a more respectable exterior to maintain and if they had their children as well taught as they were themselves, they had to keep them longer at school. They formed the class most educationally conscious yet most crippled. Teachers were hardly sympathetic. Except when they were relieved by some special circumstance teachers sunk in personal and social condition below the level of unskilled labourers. Robert Somers uses ample illustrations of teachers refusing children through lack of space or inspectors reducing the load to purify the air.

Not all parents could be completely absolved; their poverty, indifference, ill-health, migratory life, or idleness entered into the matter. Quite simply, a parent could complain that she would not allow her daughters to write "...because it would set them writing love letters" ¹⁰⁷

In many respects, a modification is needed of the

original notion that hours of labour, mortality, wages and above all, poverty, circumscribe completely education. Though these indices act as limits, they must not exclude a more complicated texture to the life-chances of the people. In the last instance, hours of labour measure the ability to appropriate education, wages measure the ability to pay. Each class, group, or sub-stratum, is variously endowed with differing hours of labour and ability to pay, but the equation of existence becomes overlaid with complications.

The apathy and indifference of parents were undoubtedly the chief reasons why so many children attended no schools; and in a lesser degree, their poverty and consequently their inability or reluctance to forego their childrens' wages; and in the cases of both boys and girls, but especially the latter, the necessity arose for their services at home. Some girls had to perform the household duties in the absence of the working mother. Others were required to assist their mother and especially to take charge of the younger children; and both boys and girls ran errands, or made themselves useful in other ways. Formerly, it was absolutely necessary for the wife or one of the children to carry the husband's meals at breakfast and dinner time to his place of work, but this cause of employment of children and hence of their irregular attendance at school had been greatly modified, and was almost entirely done away with by the cooking depots

established everywhere in the chief centres of labour.

It was certainly not the incompetence of the teachers nor the schools' inconvenient situation that affected to any great degree the school attendance, and most emphatically, it was not because the parents differed in religious belief from the conductors of the schools within their reach, nor because a particular course of religious instruction was enforced.

Good schools were fully appreciated by parents and the attendance of children was larger, longer, and more regular at them than at inferior schools. They were almost always able to charge higher fees than the average, which circumstance, without affecting the numbers, did certainly affect the class of children attending them. Yet the attendance of children at school was seriously affected by the demand for their own labour and in a lesser degree by the wages which their parents earned.

By school fees, practically very few persons were excluded from all schools,¹⁰⁸ for schools with low fees were everywhere to be found and when even these were beyond the means of the parents, charity schools, mission, Episcopalian and in a marked degree, Roman Catholic schools, or lastly the readiness of benevolent individuals to supplement or to pay the fees, left little room for the absence of children on this score.

Teachers did, however, tend to over-react to circumstances. In consequence of the crowded state

of many of the best sessional schools and of the natural desire of the teachers to fill their benches with children of a superior class, there had been a growing tendency in all quarters to raise the fees and to collect them monthly or quarterly. The obvious and invariable effect was to exclude from good schools the children of the lowest orders, many of whom could not pay more than one penny a week and who had neither the ability nor the inclination to pay a month in advance.

Children thus excluded found their way into mission schools or a lower class of adventure school, the former generally without the accommodation or teaching power to furnish a good education, and the latter still more disadvantageously placed in both respects.

In the forthcoming chapters these points will be expanded, and an assessment will be made of the texture of Scottish working class education and what was done to meet the challenge of industrialisation.

Though voluntary effort failed, there is little point in depreciating the initial sincerity of its promoters. Before unravelling the relationship between laity, church, and state, the partnership between church and government will be analysed first.

Chapter IV

The Challenge to Industrialisation:

Provision for Working Class Education by the Church and Government

a) A Changing Role for the Church.

The Act for Settling Schools 1696 and other acts passed in succeeding generations gave statutory authority to already established practices. Hence the parish schools were in the hands of the parish ministers. The schoolmaster, after his election by the heritors was examined by the presbytery and signed the Confession of Faith and the formula of the Church of Scotland. In addition the heritors had big financial powers. Thus the national establishment included a school and a schoolmaster as well as a minister and a church in every parish. The unimaginative attitudes of ministers and hesitation regarding the nobility of the teaching profession in the parochial schools, and undue regard for the theological discipline, made real progress seem unlikely. However solid achievement was made by the end of the eighteenth century. Few parishes at the close of the century were without a school, despite wide variations in teaching, attendance, accommodation, and remuneration.¹

Unfortunately in England, the education of the people was not regarded of such national importance until the nineteenth century. Here the heritage of the Reformation was the Protestant emphasis on individual judgment in matters of religion.

While a certain amount of learning was indispensable even for a man who earned his bread by manual labour, it was Bible reading alone that imposed the limit on knowledge. The ecclesiastical system did encourage the admission of poor students into the schools of religious foundation. These students with a little culture exhibited signs of superior natural capacity. This partly served to satisfy the desires of the church by filling the requirements of the inferior orders of her clergy with an order of men raised by genius alone.

For a long time the anarchical tendencies of ignorance among the great mass of the English commonality were not regarded as an evil in the polity of the state to be met with by the diffusing of knowledge, but rather as eruptions forming the inevitable phenomena of social history. These were to be restrained by the interference of an armed force. While in Scotland the school was the parochial institute indispensable for the completion of ecclesiastical organisation and harmony, in England the theory of government made active use of coercion and punishment. Only at the end of the eighteenth century were there steps taken towards provision for the education of the English poor with the provision of Sunday Schools. It was the first advance towards the cardinal idea that the school was an inseparable element of the organisation of a Christian congregation.

With the Reformation, jurisdiction not only over schools but over private teaching was transferred in

Scotland to the Reformed Church with its pyramid structure of synods, presbyteries and kirk sessions. The heritors in a parish were legally responsible for establishing schools and in theory, the presbytery was responsible for superintendence within their bounds.

Gradually, church control was whittled away and the presbytery had no power to depose for mere inefficiency. The witnesses before the Select Committee of the House of Lords in 1845 concurred in stating that its authority to remove masters for neglect of duty, cruelty or immorality had become inoperative.² In fact, the indisputable right of the General Assembly to examine schools of every description within their bounds was of dubious worth with the expansion of non-connected schools. The civil power was not obliged to uphold the authority of the church and the church had ceased to be the sole organisation of religious communion. The principles of civil and religious liberty were spreading.

The Church of Scotland always kept a tight grip on parish schools appointing teachers to schools well on into the nineteenth century. It could dismiss them, exercise superintendence and impose some measure of examination. Presbytery appointments to burgh schools also appears to have lain very largely with the church until the Revolution, thereafter the burghs increasingly asserted their independence in the matter.³ An act of 1690⁴ required that to serve in any educational institution, a teacher had to subscribe to the Confession of Faith and conform

to church principles. By 1861⁵ teacher's obligations were relieved of this imposition and examination and approval of them was transferred from presbytery to examiners nominated by a University. If approved so far they had to undertake not to act prejudicially to the Church of Scotland.

Secularism crept in in other ways. Control exercised by the church was challenged openly as in the Bothwell Case of 1792.⁶ Here the minister clashed with a majority of heritors over the appointment of the teacher. The presbytery upheld the heritors, but on appeal to the synod the minister won. Furthermore, the Court of Session found church courts incompetent, a decision that was reversed on appeal to the House of Lords. The kirk's triumph was shortlived however, for in 1803, an act was passed undermining the claims of the church.⁷ While apparently upholding the power of the church courts, in practice it undermined them by permitting appeal to the civil courts.

What happened was that gradually the claims of the church for the foundation and support of schools out of its ancient patrimony, and within its jurisdiction were becoming subject to the changing times. Although they had gradually come to be subjected to restraints, parish schools had continued to be under the authority of the church. This gave an independence to the profession of schoolmaster neither originally contemplated nor in all respects consistent with the interests of the scholars or with the public advantages.

Likewise presbytery power over deposing for inefficiency, cruelty, or neglect of duty had become inoperative. By degrees civil courts affirmed the schools were in their own nature an essentially civil concern and by implication any authority over schools which had been given by Parliament to the church courts was held by them as a civil and not an ecclesiastical jurisdiction, subject to the review of the civil courts alone.

These legal prerequisites and the changing function of church superstructure in consequence of economic, industrial, and population changes, were important measures for working class education.

Throughout the nineteenth century, clerical control was usurped by civil control through state intervention. The secular nature of state intervention and the demand for public accountability interfered not only with ecclesiastical hegemony, but also in the realm of ideas, in the 'battle for the minds of men', with church versus state, religious versus secular knowledge.⁸

The debate on the legitimate control of national education inevitably divided on factional lines, and was fought in Scotland over the decaying corpse of the parish school by the Established Church Government, and the rival Free Church. All along, the Established Church was illequipped to handle social changes beyond its control, beset by problems of education and social welfare in a society whose laws remained fundamentally those of the seventeenth century. Since the Union of 1707, the church

had been in the anomalous situation of finding itself in a country no longer possessing its own government.

Parliament at Westminster never dreamed of legislation to adapt the traditional Scottish establishment to changing circumstances. Likewise fragmentation in the presbyterian religious body did not aid progress. In the early part of the nineteenth century, it was not yet clear that the social class that controlled the state, controlled the key to education, real class issues were confused with religious zeal.

This chapter will deal with church rivalry in education, the attempt to handle the expanding population, the suppositions upon which they worked, and the rising tide of state interference that they were powerless to halt but financially needed so badly.

The existence of common schools in Scotland was greatly facilitated by the agreement of the great majority of the inhabitants in religious doctrine on the basis of the Shorter Catechism. In the presbyterian form of church government, the laity had authority both in the kirk schools, in the presbytery, in the synod and in the General Assembly. This circumstance, together with the comparative independence of the schoolmaster from clerical influence, possibly prevented the parochial schools from acquiring a sectarian character. The statutes assigning to the heritors the power of settling the branches of instruction to be taught, and the amount of fees, had contributed to the same result.

Up to the period of the Disruption of the Free Church in 1843, public attention had been scarcely awakened to the existence of features in the parish schools inconsistent with an equality of civil privileges, nor had other defects in parish schools been the subject of public scrutiny. However the separation of the Free Church inevitably clarified the issue of the equitable distribution of educational privileges since the separation raised those principles for debate. The question remained as to how to obtain them with the greatest public advantage.

Stated simply the Disruption was caused by the failure of some of the most devoted of the members of the General Assembly to establish in the civil courts or before Parliament, the right of a Christian congregation to exercise a practical control over the appointment of ministers. Their failure in the establishment of this principle resulted in four hundred ministers separating themselves from its communion.

Those same principles which led the Free Church to assert the authority of the Christian congregation in spiritual affairs were transposed to the context of public education. The school could not be regarded by the Established or by the Free Church as an institute to be separated from religious government and given up to a purely civil control. The actual nature and extent of the proper control remained to be defined and these questions involved the character of the governing body.

Doubtless the implication of the Disruption went far deeper than a mere expansion of public education. The evangelicalism of those social classes who supported the churches was coloured by their own vision of themselves as a discreet social group. In fact, the evangelicals of the Free Church did not enter the education field as dispensers of philanthropy, but had a decisive interest in propagating certain principles and had reasons for capturing the sympathy of men.⁹

Although the year 1843 was a major disaster for the Established Church in terms of loss of charges, clergy, elders, communicants and influential members, two prior secessions had occurred before. In 1733 the Associate Presbytery was formed by seceders who walked out of the Church of Scotland. It had the support of numerous prayer societies and embryonic secession congregations, but the ministers were not formally deposed until 1740.¹⁰ A second secession occurred in 1752 when Thomas Gillespie of Dunfermline was deposed by the Assembly and with Thomas Collier, formed the Relief Presbytery.¹¹ A century later many like minded ministers united to form the United Presbyterian Church of 1847.

Conflict between the moderates of the eighteenth century church establishment with their permissive social attitudes and the evangelical Calvinists with their belief in the need to regulate society on Calvinist principles, once again came out in the open in the early nineteenth century.

The revival of the evangelical party coincides with the period of rapid industrial urbanisation, population growth and migration, when a new platform was needed for coping with the new problems of parochial organisation, poor relief, and education. Socially aware as this new party was, it was not until 1833 that it won control over the General Assembly with the notable leadership of men like Thomas Chalmers, Thomas Guthrie and Robert Candlish.

In the following year, the Assembly passed two acts which began the ten years of conflict leading to the Disruption, the Chapel Act and Veto Act. The House of Lords in cases related to the Veto Act, or the right of a congregation to refuse a patron's nominees, found in favour of the patron against the veto, resulting in a struggle between church and state. The non-intrusionists pushed the matter to the point of secession by issuing the Claim of Right in 1842, which reaffirmed the position of the church with regard to the state. The government refused to intervene, hence in May 1843 one third of the ministers seceded from the Church of Scotland to form the Free Church. The dominance of the Free Church was most manifest in financially prosperous urban areas. In Glasgow, 25 out of 34 ministers seceded, Edinburgh 24 from 35, and Dundee 9 from 14.¹²

The support for the infant Free Church came from the lower middle class evangelical Calvinists, or the urban based bourgeoisie consisting of mobile new middle

class families with obscure origins little inclined to the permissive morality of the rich.¹³ The Established Church was composed largely of long standing middle class families who in the past, governed the church in an oligarchal fashion, controlling kirk sessions by co-optation. The success or failure of the Free Church for the seceders became a measure of their ability and their secession was an example of the heroic spirit of self-sacrifice for the sake of conscience.

The urban rich predominant in the Free Church was to provide its dynamic element. Each church congregation and scheme was treated as part of a business enterprise. They suffered a basic insecurity however. Having only shallow roots in bourgeois society that could not wholly compensate for their influence in magistracy and philanthropic enterprises in the city.¹⁴ Because it was the small businessman who had most to fear from an unruly proletariat¹⁵ he expressed this fear by holding the masses to the tenets of Christianity at the same time as he made his own advance into security.

A reflection of this appeared in the education scheme established in competition with the Church of Scotland, a scheme so necessary for the middle class in putting their stamp on social relations by evoking a conception of the religious nature of reality. The ingredient of the Shorter Catechism and the curriculum of its schools was the way it responded to the industrial revolution and its own self-confidence.

In so doing the middle classes hid from the working class a viable perception of their own social reality, deluding themselves into an overstatement of their own greatness.

The ecclesiastical class war overflowing in the Disruption had educational inventiveness to contribute to its armoury, but education was not the crux of the conflict, only a reflection of the state of social forces.

While efforts in the field of social control, noticeable in education, were never fully exploited by any of the presbyterian churches, their untiring energy and zeal made unusual strides in reclaiming the educationally destitute, in child rescue, and giving basic literacy to the working class in Sunday Schools and mission stations. In fact presbyterianism rewarded those who conformed. Those who did not were denied its security. On a wider front, it sought to remove institutional impediments to virtue and respectability and substitute socially acceptable alternatives. In pursuit of realisable ends, the kirk session acting through the presbytery, brought pressure to bear on magistrates for the removal of 'nuisances' like drinking, theatres, and similar forms of Sabbath desecration. Yet ultimately, the problem facing churches concerned those who refused to be helped or resisted education and controls of any description.

Before discussing the evangelising of the spiritually destitute, we must investigate the way the churches expanded their educational arrangements to meet new needs,

and the significance of the intervention of the state in financing their best intentions.

b) Expansion of Education by the Churches

Little had been accomplished towards the extending and improving of Scottish schooling by 1843 as the question was still largely unresolved. The Church of Scotland, by statute the guardian of the national educational system, was the national church no longer and her schools educating less than one third of Scottish students. The effect of the Disruption was to make the school system less representative of the nation than it had been before and the educational situation as a whole was elaborate and sectionalised.

Though the great mass of the population was still presbyterian, various ecclesiastical variations of this faith, such as the United Presbyterian Church of 1847, had appeared. Outside it, the Episcopal Church continued to occupy a small, but important, position in the religious and political affairs of the country. At the same time the Catholic faith was spreading, being alarmingly in evidence with the Irish immigration and Catholics coming from the countryside to the city. In fact, Catholics had been harried after Culloden and many bishops and priests were forced to flee the country. An English bill reducing discrimination against Roman Catholics was passed in 1778, but while gaining the support of Scottish Moderates, it was opposed by others. Attempts to pass a Scottish measure were thwarted, until eventually in 1793 Catholics

were relieved of the worst of the penal disabilities under which they laboured.

In harness with these developments, a variety of new secular ideas and influences was beginning to challenge and undermine the unquestioned authority of religion. All in all, the prospect of the churches as the arbiters of intellectual, moral, and social values, was open to question, and it seemed inappropriate for any religious denomination to determine and control the educational arrangements of the entire country. Basically, the churches had to concern themselves with two aspects of the problem of provision; the need to provide for those who sought it and the need to encourage the desire among those who did not seek it. That their schools provided for the need is an open question, as without doubts they delayed the emergence of a more rational system.

In 1824 an act of Parliament established new parishes in Scotland quoad sacra declared legitimate for ecclesiastical purposes only. In 1867 there were only 27 poor schools in these districts, founded under an act of 1838 in which the teachers' salary was provided by the state as long as the heritors built the school and school house. Besides this act, 1824 was an important date for other reasons, it was the date from which the Established Church started to reconsider its role in education. Alarmed at the future prospects, the General Assembly appointed a committee on education which became its oldest

standing committee, and charged it with the duty of co-ordinating provision for church schools.¹⁶ Partly it was a response to overtures laid before the Assembly from several lowland and highland presbyterians outlining the insufficiency in the means of education and religious instruction.¹⁷

The resulting education scheme fixed schools only in parishes where there was already a parochial school, the schoolmasters having either free accommodation, garden, fuel, croft or their equivalent. The scheme was maintained by giving allowances to masters from the funds of the committee. By 1829, eighty five schools with 6,486 scholars had been settled, and in 1836, when the General Assembly proposed to promote elementary education in towns, there were ninety schools on voluntary contributions with 7,200 scholars.¹⁸

To promote its scheme for town education and education of schoolmasters at the session school Edinburgh, it resolved to petition the House of Commons for aid. In August 1834, £10,000 was voted in the House of Commons for the erection of school houses in aid of private subscription for education of poor children in great towns in Scotland, and for the erection of model schools in England.¹⁹ As a result, new school housing was built in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Paisley. Even though a further £60,000 was granted for the purpose of assisting in forming a permanent endowment for schoolmasters in each of the forty highland districts,²⁰ there was still the

belief among members of the community that opportunities for instruction were universal in the lowlands.

Localities in the lowlands, they believed, could do more for themselves than localities in the highlands.²¹ Some steps were made to rectify the imbalance in education, when a lowland committee was appointed to make it their duty to observe that every lowland parish was provided with at least one school. The revelations made in the Glasgow survey of education²² in 1835 had prompted such immediate action. However, the criteria for aid to the lowlands was 'neither means, nor opportunity, nor inclination' combined with a more frequent and extended inspection of all schools in the establishment. Like most church schemes, there was shortage of money and the Normal Seminary which was once John Wood's session school in Market Street Edinburgh was in need of a parliamentary grant for upkeep.

In other quarters too, education was undergoing a reshuffle. The infant Free Church in 1843 had a free hand to impress on the education system their own brand of innovation. It was frequently referred to as the 'planting of schools' or sowing the seeds of fidelity. A number of parochial schoolmasters who declared their allegiance to the new secession were forced to resign their livings, as were Free Church masters of endowed schools whose trustees represented the interests of the Established Church and S.S.P.C.K. It was reported in October 1843²³ that 80 parish schoolmasters had been

ousted, also 57 teachers of assembly schools, 27 S.S.P.C.K. teachers, and 196 from private schools. In the dismissal of these Free Church teachers, we find the immediate opportunity for the establishment of the Free Church educational scheme, but this was not the sole reason. Nor was it, in the long run, the most important, since it does not explain why the scheme grew to the proportions that it did. Only the militancy and aggressions of a large section of the membership of the new church will explain this.

At the first Assembly of the Free Church held in Edinburgh in May 1843, Dr. Welsh the convenor of the educational scheme, discussed what was essential and desirable in education.²⁴ The effective religious control and training of the young persons connected with the church was the essential mission. A sum not less than £200,000 was decided sufficient and a scheme set on foot for assisting in the erection of five hundred schools for £100 each, to carry out the enterprise.²⁵ By 1845, £60,000 had been subscribed towards the building fund.²⁶ Considerable jealousy existed between the churches even over the question of buildings. Landowners often refused sites for schools even when they had granted them for churches, thereby holding out the temptation to join the schools of the establishment.

Despite this, by 1851 there were some 424 congregation schools, 174 side and female industrial schools specially for teaching needlework, 13 missionary

schools in industrial working class districts, with altogether 689 teachers of some 60,000 scholars of Free Church origin.²⁷ Altogether the Free Church and to a lesser extent the Church of Scotland, contributed in the decade 1841-1851 to the building of 36% of the public schools and 54% of the private schools erected in that period.²⁸ A number of minor congregations of the United Presbyterian, Roman Catholic and Episcopal Churches had also established an educational foothold.

Initial bursts of enthusiasm did not have a promising outcome. The period of the growth to maturity in the education schemes of the two most important churches was virtually one of stagnation. The Church of Scotland as opposed to more evangelical groups had never been alive to the problem of the lowland cities or had, at least, ignored it in favour of an optimistic evaluation of educational progress. Consequently, the Education Committee withdrew aid from town schools of Greenock, Lanark and Perth;

"...localities in which the means of education were easily accessible and where, in their opinion, the education of the poorer classes ought to be provided for without drawing on a central fund"²⁹

Only female industrial schools flourished until there were 73 in 1872,³⁰ and schools on the highland and lowland scheme remained at their pre 1851 levels.³¹

Similarly, the Free Church, who were less afraid of industrial conditions, boosted their missionary schools from 12 in 1847 to 50 in 1870, at the expense of congregational and industrial schools and the teachers

employed. Taking into account the unreliable statistics, it is possible to venture a guess that the scholars attending Free Church schools remained constant, from 1850 to 1870, at between 70 and 75,000.

Minor religious bodies made an inconsequential showing on the league table of school output.³² Eight denominations could barely muster 169 establishments with only 5% of total scholars.³³ Indeed, non denominational bodies were more representative with nearly as many schools as the Established Church³⁴ and 35% of all scholars.³⁵ Like the settling of Free Church schools, denominations other than the Church of Scotland had a relatively slow growth emanating in a boom during the years 1841 to 1851.³⁶

At first sight this looks like a respectable achievement, thus supporting the arguments against state interference in the voluntary provision of education. Why should the state interfere when so much was being done locally?

The simple fact remained that by 1851 only the Established Church could have gone without aid, for as little as 6% of its total income came from state grants.³⁷ On the other hand, a quarter of the Free Church's money was from this source. Again the Established Church gained only 35% of income from fees while others had over 40% from this source, 73% in the case of the non-denominationals. Alone, the Church of Scotland could not have coped with all the school children

needing education, for barely one half of attenders turned up at their schools.³⁸ Perhaps without the looming presence of the state to sever dependence on fees, mid nineteenth century schools would have been subject to the whims of inflation and the vagaries of the market.

If this was not enough neither the Church of Scotland nor the Free Church catered separately for the interests of the Scottish Catholic population. Where no separate Catholic schools were in existence, children attended a presbyterian church school, although presbyterians often challenged the doctrine of Catholicism and abhorred the government's decision to publically finance sectarian religions.

The challenge of Catholicism was primarily an urban one and specific to Glasgow with its immigrant Irish and highland population. In 1681, there were 14,000 Roman Catholics in Scotland, 12,000 in the Highlands and Islands³⁹ but only a few in the lowlands as the enforcement of the Penal Laws was rigorous. By 1779, the Catholics in Glasgow city numbered only 30 with little need for separate schools.⁴⁰ Cleland's census of 1831 shows that of a total population of 202,426 - 36,554 were Irish.

The problem of the Catholics was the problem of the working class and poor. Nearly all Catholics were in unskilled work and residents of the poorest areas of the city, a fact that encouraged their integration with

local children. However on a national or city wide level the picture was different and the persistence of separate establishments for Catholic charges, well on into the next century, testified to their determination to remain a race apart.

c) The Intervention of the State

The education of the Scottish working class through formal institutions owed much to the government grants administered through the Scottish churches, since throughout the 1850's the churches in their drive for education were constantly weakened by lack of finance. There was a loss of contributions in various congregations as wealthy contributors died. Collections were falling off, and many ceased to give assistance under the impression that it was about to be superseded.⁴¹

Furthermore the experience of the Free Church was proof that voluntary effort on its own was not enough to meet the educational needs of the period. As we have shown non-parochial schools of the various churches could not provide for the deficiency in accommodation. Begun with great initial enthusiasm, the schemes accomplished in their own way a great deal, but severely strained the resources of the church and were only saved from collapse by the government scheme, instituted in 1846, to assist teachers.⁴²

Scotland's education system, following the issuing of state grants became intimately connected with England. State intervention posed irresistible challenges to the

Scottish tradition in education and much disagreement in public was voiced about this link.⁴³ In private, the voluntary movement was grateful for the benefits and largesse such friendships engendered. Where the government did much to streamline the church system, at the unenviable cost of strictly English interpretations of class differences, the result was a mid-Victorian educational bureaucracy that laid the foundations for the school board system of the 1870's. The new department of state established in 1839 was the Committee of the Privy Council on Education.

"Twenty one years later ... this government office had one of the largest administrations and clerical staffs of the Home Civil Service. More money was being spent on popular education in Great Britain than on any other single project administered by a civil department" 44

Whether there was great reluctance or not in Scotland to accept aid, social conditions and popular uprisings were as applicable to Scotland as to England, and informed opinion north of the border was intimately aware of the social consequences of smugness concerning the educational state of the lower orders.

At the turn of the century, it seemed that the need to solve the social problems of the day was so pressing that the rival denominations in England would be prepared to sink their differences. The British and Foreign School Society had been founded in 1808, with the object of propagating a non-sectarian system of education that the Non-Conformist Joseph Lancaster was

developing in his school.

Pedagogically, the plans of Lancaster, and Bell, his Anglican rival, for the new monitorial system had much in common. They had provided a solution to the problem of bringing literacy to the masses as quickly and as cheaply as possible, although the Church of England felt itself threatened by Lancaster's assertion that education ought to be a national concern. The Anglican's claim to a monopoly of the country's education, was based more immediately and substantially on the Act of Uniformity of 1662. From 1698 onwards, Anglicans provided educational facilities at the charity school level through the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, but the Non-Conformists' actions implied a challenge to the Anglican Christian assertion that it was the rightful schoolmaster of the nation. The outcome was the establishment in 1811 of the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor. On one point at least Anglican dissenters and secularists alike could agree; the building of more schools would help to prevent the social unrest of the day from escalating into widespread revolution.

One of the leading advocates of a policy for controlling the lower orders of society by means of a suitable education, and the moulding of the government enterprise in this direction, was Dr. James Kay, later to become Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth.⁴⁵ His remedy for the evils of Luddism and trade unionism was to provide;

"...a good secular education to enable them to understand the true causes which determine their physical condition and regulate the distribution of wealth among the several classes of society."⁴⁶

Kay-Shuttleworth also shared the commonly accepted belief that any form of secular instruction had to be combined with careful moral and religious instruction.⁴⁷

A contemporary of Kay-Shuttleworth, Lord Brougham, had worked on behalf of education in Parliament between 1816 and 1820, chairing the committee that had inquired into the education of the lower orders in England and Wales, and eventually Scotland. He attempted to get financial support for popular education but the first government grants for education were delayed until 1833.

Of all the arguments that were used to persuade the propertied classes to subscribe to the building of schools, that of the need to avert revolution, was the most effective. Chartist leaders, albeit unintentionally, were more successful in loosening the purse strings of the charitable than were the monarchs. In 1833 the government offered a direct subsidy of £20,000 to the two English societies to assist them in building new schools. At the time no Scottish schools applied, presumably because the need for school houses was less pressing, but in 1834 the sum of £10,000 was set aside for similar assistance north of the border.⁴⁸ The grant was repeated again in 1836, 1837 and 1838.

It was from the beginning restricted in use, as it applied only to the erection of new schools and could be claimed only by reputable educational agencies.

Nevertheless by 1839 the administration of the grant had become a complicated task and the special committee of the Privy Council on Education was formed under the secretaryship of Kay-Shuttleworth to deal with its distribution. Naturally, the giving of unconditional grants to church bodies thus enabling them to expand their activities, reinforced the church establishment's claim to being regarded as the legitimate agency for the education of the people.

Much of the government's thinking on education was the result of an enquiry by a Select Committee which reported in 1838.⁴⁹ Its main finding centred upon the lack of education among the working classes and it was recommended that there should be means of suitable daily education within their reach for a proportion of not less than one eighth of the population.⁵⁰ To meet this requirement, the first phase of the Department's activities was devoted to encouraging the patrons of education to expand the resources available by offering grants to supplement local effort, as there were neither sufficient schools, teachers, desks, nor books to allow anything approaching an adequate education to be given to the children of the labouring poor. So great though was the fear of governmental interference, that the Department could never take the initiative, it could do no more than create the conditions that would foster the charitable work of the propertied classes. Furthermore, it was an axiomatic belief that while local effort could be supplemented by the superior resources of the government,

it was never to be superseded. In the wealthy areas, where funds could be raised easily, such plans were readily provided, while in the poor areas, where the influence of the classroom was needed the most, the children had to await the advent of the school board.⁵¹

The job of overseeing the work of the government was the responsibility of the inspectorate. Before 1840 the presbytery tested schoolmasters and inspectors, and although in 1799 the General Assembly of the Scottish Church required an annual representation from each presbytery, this test of efficiency was weak. It lacked the power to meet deficiencies with financial aid and ignored or failed to replace ineffective teachers. The situation in England was even worse, where there was no statutory provision for education, there was no legal basis for such inspection.⁵²

The first inspector trusted with oversight of Church of Scotland schools was John Gibson. He relinquished the post to John Gordon after joining the Free Church in 1843, but returned in 1848 as inspector of Free Church schools receiving grants. The inspector's job was to investigate applications for building grants, report upon schools receiving aid and when asked, investigate the state of education in particular districts. Because of its overseeing and recommending function, the inspectorate was immensely powerful and the church was careful to choose the right men. Naturally their power was enhanced with the issuing of increasingly

complicated minutes by the Privy Council.

One of these heralding an important extension of public control over elementary education, was the publication of a series of minutes and regulations in 1846 and 1847 inaugurating the pupil-teacher system. The system was the brainchild of Kay-Shuttleworth. He had been impressed in 1838 when he visited Holland, Belgium, and Paris, with the quality of orphan houses and prisons.⁵³ There was little evidence then that these visits and his preoccupation with pauper education would form the embryo of all later legislation and management of working class education.

The problem was to find a method of training;

"...best fitted for reclaiming the pauper youth of England to the virtues and restoring them to the happiness of her best instructed peasantry"⁵⁴

So in 1838 a large institute for 1,100 children was built at Norwood with a government grant of £500 to be the scene of Kay-Shuttleworth's first educational reform. The teachers were recruited from John Wood's sessional school Edinburgh, and Stow's model school, as Kay-Shuttleworth was confident of the inadequacy of the monitorial system, viz a viz class teaching. Kay-Shuttleworth in fact, brought many young teachers across the border thereby widening Stow's influence and profoundly adding to the debt that England owed Scotland in the field of teacher training.

He felt that success at Norwood would ensure the adoption of a district school scheme, to separate

children from the evil influence of the workhouses. The purpose was to prepare teachers for workhouse districts and schools of industry, in schools which would reconcile children of the poor to a life of hardest toil while tasting the delights of mental activity and religious communion.

When the Whig government came to power in July 1846 grants were given for the aid of the new pupil-teacher system. The monitorial system was now replaced by older assistants institutionally regulated and examined, with teachers offered financial inducements. The system sanctioned and embodied in the minuted of 1846 was seen as a means of encouraging the importance of elementary education by making teaching places open to general competition without religious distinction, and operated not by restraint or regulation but by the stimulus of distinction and substantial benefits.

Quite simply a system of apprenticeship was instituted, beginning at thirteen years. Ten pounds was given at the end of the first year of apprenticeship and £20 at the end of the fifth. On passing a Queen's scholarship examination, pupil-teachers were awarded a grant of £20-£25 at a Normal School at the end of which they sat for the Certificate of Merit. A certified teacher gained an augmentation of £15-£30 conditional on managers paying twice that sum. Henceforth, no certified teacher in a state-aided school could receive less than £45 per year with rent free house, the average salary

was £70, plus £12 for three apprentices. The teacher was allowed an apprentice if he could pass an examination and once the teacher had an apprentice, the school was inspected annually.⁵⁵

The system had unforeseen consequences however, for by succouring the voluntary schools and giving them a new lease of life, its inauguration did much to stimulate the expansion of some elementary education, but did so at the price of delaying the introduction of universal elementary education.

d) The Revised Code and its Results

After issuing the minutes of 1846 and regulations regarding pupil-teachers, the state moved in more decisive ways into Scottish working class education. It was the notorious Revised Code of 1862, the crux of the system of payment by results, and the principle of the 3 R's, that caused so much ill feeling. Why should it have been received so badly in Scotland? The answer to this exposes the strengths and failures of the voluntary principle in education, as the Code struck at what had been sacred in Scottish education - the parish schools and their right to teach higher branches of knowledge.⁵⁶

The principle of the Revised Code was this; on recommendation of the Select Committee on Education, appointed in 1858,⁵⁷ the Committee of Council thought that it was desirable to modify the form of annual grants so as to do away with misappropriation into

specific channels. Instead of paying a proportion towards the salary of the schoolmaster, so much towards the pupil-teachers, so much towards books and so much in capitation where that grant applied, they adopted the plan of paying one gross sum to the managers of each school which was to receive grants at all. The principle of calculating the grant was the number, the attendance, and the proficiency of the scholars and certain conditions as to the efficiency which the school itself was to fulfil.⁵⁸ What was new about the Revised Code was that success in basic subjects now constituted the main, though not the sole determination of the size of a school's grant.

Up until 1846 the Committee of Council gave aid to education in the form of inspection of schools or in providing for the building of them. The system continued in force until the year 1846. At that time the Committee of Council undertook to provide for the annual maintenance as well as the building of schools. From 1846 until the year 1861 the form in which aid was given for annual maintenance consisted in grants towards the salaries of principal teachers, stipends for assistant or pupil-teachers and, in England, certain grants which were called capitation grants but which were never extended to Scotland. Some trifling grants were also promised for books and maps for schools.⁵⁹ At one time, very liberal aid was given for the maintenance of Normal Schools in which teachers prepared for their profession.

The heat generated by the 1862 proposals involved their complete departure from all previous norms, and the debate was fueled by the findings of the English Newcastle Report. Apparently a great weakness of the previous grants was their inflexibility. The Department paid for all or nothing and gaps existed between the inspector's assessment of schools and the performance of pupils as no standards were implied in inspector's reports. After examining the state of schooling in selected areas, they found that there were 58.3 children to each teacher.

On the basis of this ratio, the framers of the Report decided that the 2,000,000 children;

"...the largest number for whom trained teachers will be required until a considerable change of feeling has taken place amongst the poor as to the education of their children" 60

needed 33,000 teachers. The emphasis then was directed to economy. There was evidence to show that a greater number of pupil-teachers were maintained than was necessary. The reason for this was that both school managers and masters had wanted as many pupil-teachers as possible - the more apprentices, the greater the gratuity.

Previously the Committee of Council provided the active stipend of every pupil-teacher, and pupil-teachers were admitted in the proportion of about one to every 40 scholars in average attendance. In schools which had just got above the limit of 40 scholars, a pupil-teacher was almost as a matter of course engaged.

It appeared that in these same schools they often retained masters who had the very highest augmentation grants;

"...many striking instances in which schools were obtaining the government grant ranging from 20/- to 23/- or 24/- per scholar"⁶¹

Furthermore, only one fifth of children in public elementary schools belonging to religious denominations were in their twelfth year or upwards.⁶² Elsewhere, the report established that two thirds to three quarters of children left school without having obtained the minimal education thought suitable to their humble status.⁶³

Although the recommendations made by the Newcastle Committee for equipping working class children to meet the practical needs of life were condemned by Kay-Shuttleworth,⁶⁴ Robert Lowe, Vice President of the Education Department, had conceived of a plan for fixing a minimum of education not a maximum.⁶⁵ If we disregard personal rivalries, in the final analysis the promulgation and enforcement of the Revised Code constituted a significant victory for the state in its struggle with the churches for control over education. No longer was the state going to subsidise schools whose primary function was to rear the young in the principles of the Christian faith. Now, under Articles 40 to 53 of the Code, 4/- per scholar was to be granted for the average number in attendance and all those scholars who attended more than 200 mornings or afternoon meetings of their school, were to obtain 8/- by examination if they

were more than six years of age, plus 6/- without examination if under six.

The most hated clause and the one that had the most significance for Scotland was Clause 4.⁶⁶ It stipulated that the object of the grant was to promote the education of children belonging to the classes who supported themselves by manual labour, consequently it conflicted with the quality of instruction in parish schools which relied upon 'higher' subjects. It seemed to be making Scottish education a class issue.

A firm belief still persisted that the poor boy sat next to the laird's son in the parish school, regardless of the fact that parochial schools were now in the minority. E. Woodford, a school inspector, was prompted to remark that;

"...the minister, although he may be a strong supporter of his parochial school, educates his own children otherwise, therefore, even in parochial schools, the body of children attending schools on the annual grant list are strictly of the class intended by the Minister of Council. Few are of the middle class"⁶⁷

The Argyll Commissioners were convinced;

"These results (Privy Council Minutes) furnish an easy explanation of the fact that the most vehement opponents of the Revised Code have been some of the inferior school masters"⁶⁸

The question was whether the Code needed modification for Scotland.

Undoubtedly in Scotland education was a legal duty, while in England it was left to volunteers and did not compel erection of schools. Some believed the Code was mischievous;

"It seems to us, therefore, that as these inquiries necessarily tend to diminish this laudable feeling (uniting of feeling between classes) and to encourage the distinction between one class and another, they ought if possible, to be discontinued"69

England no doubt needed such a clause;

"without such a rule, it is very certain that schools might be erected for private purposes, while no provision might be made for the education of the masses"70

On this issue the Committee stood firm. Certainly the state seemed to believe that the faults of grant aid in Scotland emphasised class and regional differences and inter-denominational rivalry,⁷¹ but for the Argyll Commissioners, the parochial schools were beyond criticism and they ignored its minority influence.⁷² For them the amount of government aid given to parochial schools was an expression of just how many poor children it was benefiting, otherwise they would have ceased to be aided.⁷³

In short, the Commissioners were attacking the financial stringency of the Revised Code only in terms of the parochial schools. They used their report to convince at all costs that the Scottish system was not a class system and English definitions were useless. In part this defensiveness resulted from an earlier institutional peculiarity in Scotland - elementary and secondary education were not institutionally separate. Nothing comparable to English experience was in evidence. In England with the absence of statutory education and a larger economic and emotional gap between rich and poor,

a superstructure of secondary education was the great event in middle class education in the nineteenth century. The upper classes felt relatively less threatened and therefore less defensive. North of the border the opponents of even mild changes envisaged the Code in its threatening aspect, and were obviously more nationalistic about the intimidation to middle class education.

Mixed feelings prevailed among churchmen. Rivalry between various presbyterian groups blurred the issues at the edges. The foundling of the National Education Association in 1850 and the public school system outlined in Viscount Melgund's education bills provoked characteristic retaliation from the Church of Scotland.⁷⁴ Lurking behind the changes was the view adopted by the Establishment that any alteration in the educational arrangements of the country which affected her exclusive control over parish schools were unacceptable. Less harshly the Free Church regretted the extension of the Code to Scotland as it indicated that no immediate steps were to be taken in the direction of national education.⁷⁵ Probably to the relief of both, the Catholic Church was in firm opposition because they found that under it it would not be allowed to spend so much time at public expense educating the young in their faith.

Putting aside religious outbursts many objections to the Code were far from trivial. The Code required six standards accordingly to which the children were to

be examined - in reading, a narrative in monosyllables; in writing, the formation on a slate from dictation of letters, capital and small in manuscript; in arithmetic, the formation of figures from 1-20 and the addition and subtraction of figures up to 10; in reading, a short paragraph in a newspaper; in writing, a similar paragraph slowly dictated once by a few words at a time. Children of six years old were supposed to be capable of passing the first, and children of twelve, the six standards. Practically the age was not fixed, the rule was that the teacher presented the children according to his idea of proficiency, but once presented in a standard they had at the next inspection to be presented in a higher one, whether they passed or failed.

At once the efficiency of the parish schools as a step ladder to higher learning was to be lost. Two of the assistant commissioners for the Argyll Commission, A.C. Sellar and Lieut. Col. C.F. Maxwell had collected returns in the country districts they visited to show that;⁷⁶

"The number of scholars who go from the parochial schools annually is not large. There were 10,865 scholars on the rolls of 130 parochial schools when visited and these numbers have not varied much within the last five years, but only an average of 25 scholars or 0.23% have gone to universities during these years, from these 130 schools"

This was a strong and indisputable argument against supposed efficiency. If the standards were not too high so that the bulk could pass them, it was clear that the

bulk had been neglected before, for the sake of the few learning the higher branches. Even the teaching method had conditioned this;

"The chief defect in teaching was not procuring the attention of the whole class to each question the individual method was used starting with the dux"⁷⁷

Teachers who taught Latin and Greek were apt to neglect the younger or at least the less intelligent of the younger children;

"...it is in those of the old fashioned parochial schools which we visited we found not unfrequently, a class of three or four boys in Latin, two of them perhaps the ministers sons, and one the teachers, about a fourth part of the school able to read well and to write well in copy books and to do a little arithmetic, but the other three fourths unable to spell or to do the simplest sums in arithmetic and able only to read indifferently"⁷⁸

Clearly the majority had been sacrificed for the excellence of the minority.

The 'progressives' giving evidence in the first report of the Argyll Commission sided with the efficiency of the new scheme and gave it a warm reception. John Gordon, Inspector of Church of Scotland schools stated categorically that the higher branches were only for the middle class⁷⁹ and wanted to see the higher branches separated into the higher class schools for the middle class, leaving the parochial schools for elementary education. Others believed the Revised Code would save money and secure for the first time the advantages of getting certified teachers and grants in aid for mission schools in destitute districts where

they were excluded before.⁸⁰

More serious objections persisted however. These were exposed by Kay-Shuttleworth in a pamphlet published in 1868, 'Memorandum on Popular Education'. Antagonistic from the start by the minor role delegated to him in the formulation of the new Code, he criticised its implementation and the run down of his brain child, the pupil-teacher system. Grants given to maintain the number and efficiency of teachers were withdrawn and the condition of capitation grant substituted for the cut down aid from 12/3d to 8/6d per head.⁸¹ The conditions of employment of pupil-teachers were relaxed so that a master might have 89 scholars without aid of apprentices or assistant teachers. The minutes of 1846 prescribed one pupil-teacher to 25 scholars ordinarily attending, while the Revised Code stipulated one pupil-teacher for every 40 scholars or one assistant master for every 80 scholars after 50 scholars had been assigned to a principal teacher.⁸² In conjunction with this the 7½ hours of instruction for the pupil-teacher by a master was reduced to 5 to be received in the evening school. In 1865-6, the payment for training pupil-teachers was withdrawn and substitute agreements dissolved by six months notice for indenture of five years apprenticeship. It seemed to render the roles of pupil-teachers and master more uncertain and weakened the pupils' motives for zealous application. Kay-Shuttleworth bemoaned the passing of the pupil-teachers who regarded their

occupation as a divinely ordained vocation. "There has been a deterioration in the whole machinery of education"⁸³

Others were alarmed that the status of teachers when their distinctive young men of quality⁸⁴ were threatened, and could not take stock of the inquisitiveness of the new rules in requiring evidence of the social class of parents. Church witnesses thought that religious bodies had a dubious claim to be entrusted with duties not belonging to them, such as the management of secular education. The more informed⁸⁵ were aware that the teacher's income being dependent upon attendances, varied according to the season of the year, with difficulty in guaranteeing attendances particularly in the highlands and industrial areas. Such facts highlighted the inadequacies of voluntarism without compulsion, a fact that could only be cured by a new education act. Yet regardless of Anglophobic objections, there was an overall belief in progress and the salutary effect that the Revised Code would have on working class education.

Scotland was to have a unique experience with the Revised Code. It was put into effect in England by the minutes of May 1862,⁸⁶ but Robert Lowe agreed he needed more information on Scotland, so although Scottish schools were examined under the strictures of the Code, the grants were continued on the old 1860 Code. He made this concession as payment would not save much because

there was no capitation grant for Scottish schools. In 1864, it was decided that Scotland should imitate England and the full system was in operation only six weeks before the appointment of the Argyll Committee in June 1864. Payments were suspended but the ^emethod of individual examination by standards continued as it was obvious that a major education act was in the offering.

Some of the worst fears regarding the effects of the 1862 Code were not shared by the government inspectors of Scottish schools who had first hand knowledge of its workings. Failure in the three R's appeared to be mostly under standard I and II, that is the younger classes, the instruction of which as before carried on, had often not been the form required by standard examination.⁸⁷ Failures were least in the higher subjects although there the numbers examined were much smaller. The standards dispensed with the habit of hasty advance in favour of deliberate, sure progress, and 'standards' developed the concept of different abilities at different ages.

Improvements in school management increased teaching power not so much to meet teaching attendance but to teach more effectively. Subjects beyond elementary stage were introduced mainly to meet the desires of a portion of pupils above the class of those engaged in manual labour. Where higher subjects were taught effectively, the schools made an excellent appearance in standard examinations;

"I have no reason to think that the higher branches have seriously suffered from the greater attendance directed to the elementary subjects since the introduction of the Revised Code"⁸⁸

Likewise a well ordered school with from 40-70 children obtained more money under the Revised Code.⁸⁹ Early fears by teachers seemed to have been dispelled;

"In my district the Revised Code is regarded by the majority of teachers with steadily regarded fervour. Its determined opponents are, I think, either outsiders whose objections are theatrical and who have never faced it in practice, or those who stating a presupposition against it have not given it a fair trial"⁹⁰

It seemed that strong objections were held by managers and teachers, most of the former and a majority of the latter had never read the Code. "I find the Revised Code examination liked by good teachers and disliked by bad teachers"⁹¹ Not without reason therefore;

"...the number of really well-to-do people who now send their children to our community parochial schools is much smaller than it was in earlier and simpler times"⁹²

The well-to-do sought more aristocratic and less socially promiscuous schools for their children which was part of a general fashion. They were also deterred because there was an increase in the number of children attending schools,⁹³ as the difficulty of retaining children in a well conducted school had been exaggerated.

There was however one unforeseen result. The partial operation of the Code where the financial conditions depended upon the old regulations had the effect of presenting children for examination in as low a grade as

possible. The number presented fell short of the number entered as having made the requisite attendances and the unrepresented were frequently among the younger. This dodge by the schoolmaster was not practised with impunity. Those presented therefore, were likely to be the ones who would pass easily, thus keeping up the success rate and the illusion of efficiency.

It developed into a systematic practice in Scotland and perpetuated an evil always present - the nurturing of an elite group of scholars at the expense of the dull for the sake of effect.⁹⁴ "...the average of presentation is upwards of 15% greater in English than in Scottish schools"⁹⁵ The number examined was less than three quarters the number qualified by attendance for individual examinations and the number examined was about 50% of the number present and 72% of the number qualified, "...many scholars have been purposely and improperly left out of the examination schedule"⁹⁶ Only eternal vigilance on the part of the inspectors helped to eradicate the disguised inefficiency.

The implication for the education of the working class was obvious, as old traditions in Scottish education were dying hard, poor scholars or poor attendances were ignored and treated as an incumbrance upon the system. Clearly the force of established tradition tried to overrule parliamentary authority.

e) Conclusion on the Revised Code

Some considerable space has been dedicated to the workings of the Revised Code because of its importance for the working classes who received education through the churches. Both Robert Lowe and James Kay-Shuttleworth had wanted to make effective use of the financial weapons of the state in order to control the education of the poor, and for this end the year 1862 was a watershed in two respects.

First, the drive for efficiency and economy demanded a restatement of intentions as to the purpose and beneficiaries of state education. New definitions moulded in English circumstances prompted Scotland to dispense with over-sensitivity towards its hallowed traditions, and face the facts of educational life. The object of the exercise being to secure more regular attendance and the highest possible educational results. Under the Code, aid could be for the first time obtained for schools in the poorest localities. Previously the regulations of 1860 helped only those who could help themselves. Under the Revised Code Article 90, many schools in more extensive parishes came under the new minutes. These schools could not under the old Code fulfil the pecuniary conditions for the reception of the grant. A by-product was a whole new educational theory as the changes in teacher training emphasised efficiency.

The Code was a watershed in another respect, the religious monopoly was breached by the state not in 1872

as is commonly supposed, but in 1862. By emphasising the secular element in education at the expense of the religious it forced the churches to subordinate the paramouncy of their former function to the needs of a modern industrial society. The strength of the opposition that was generated testifies to the apprehension with which the passing of the old order was viewed.

School managers and teachers had every reason to be fearful of the future. There existed a fear that educational provision was going to be exclusively for the lowest class of people and children of parents who could pay were to be excluded from the reckoning. These fears were not without foundation, especially where there was no legitimate secular education to cushion a fall. Those traditionalists who used the argument of the equality of classes in the parochial schools were not the labouring poor, but the middle class who feared the education of their children would be impaired.

The case for providing the majority of the British working class children with a crash course in literacy and numeracy, in both their own interests and those of society as a whole, had become overwhelming by the early 1860s. The Revised Code was a fail-safe system for literacy. As the findings of the Argyll Commission and inspectors were tantamount to a public declaration that the teaching profession was ignoring its duty towards what essentially were poor and working class scholars, the Code at least intended to send the sons of the

labouring classes away from school able to read a newspaper with ease, able to write a tolerably spelled intelligible letter without a painful effort, and able to work the simple rules of arithmetic. When school managers argued that it would result in a cut in grants what they were saying in effect, was that the Department was too ambitious. Since the size of the grant depended on the individual child's success in passing an examination, school masters had to pay more attention to each child in the school, whereas before they encouraged the dux, or those who could pay well for it.

The ideal of poor scholars reaching University was suitable in a rural economy, but in towns and populous districts for which the Code was designed, the working class had no such egalitarian traditions. Social mobility through education was out of the question. What had happened was that the lack of secondary schools had led to a certain proportion of elementary school candidates going to University - hence the lad o' pairts - yet professional, not monetary zeal was the criterion at the expense or neglect of younger children. Elementary education was therefore backward in Scotland.

The Revised Code did not suddenly make the education of the working class inspiring, in certain cases it merely intensified the use of bad teaching methods already in existence, but in so far as the cause of the defects of education were in schools themselves, the government believed it could remedy it. Besides;

"...in the case of those teachers who want to try to cover elementary deficiencies by getting up a few showy things for examination days, the change produced is for the better, in as far as what is done is real and is extended to a greater number of children"⁹⁷

"But it seems more likely that most of the Scots took the practical, if limited view that something in the nature of the Revised Code was necessary... and that its attendant evils could be tolerated until the principal aim had been achieved. In that case, it may even be that they were right and that this was a necessary stage in the evolution of education in Scotland. But it was an unpleasant stage and one feels that more of them might have openly recognised the fact."⁹⁸

A. Church State and the Working Class

Between 1841 and 1871 in Scotland, the number of children eligible for education rose from 610,401 to 776,871 a rise of 166,470 or 27.3%. According to the calculations of the Government Commission on Education⁹⁹ there were on the roll of all schools 312,795 scholars. Allowing for adjustments, at its most optimistic this is equivalent to 50% of all 'eligible' in the mid 1860's. Because in 1851, schools coped with some 56% of eligibles,¹⁰⁰ the fact remains that in fifteen years, the magnitude of the population rose by 25% and yet the relative size of the educated group fell, or at its best remained constant. Therefore, more children were going without education than ever before. How was this possible when churches expanded their provinces and the government stepped in to aid the education of the labouring class?

Virtual stagnation of church schools meant they

were incapable of increasing their share of the hold over school provision. This was the inherent weakness of denominationalism, it led to duplication, competition, and inadequate distribution of schools. On the other hand, government grants and the Privy Council system relied on the Victorian notion that only those bodies should be helped who could help themselves. As a consequence of the increasingly efficient bureaucratic education machine, the privileged got better grants, more teachers and equipment.

The Education Department of the Committee of the Privy Council in 1839 was entrusted with the distribution of a sum voted annually for the purpose of 'promoting the education of children belonging to classes who support themselves by manual labour'¹⁰¹ The rules for grant aid were that a school should belong to a religious denomination, scriptures were to be read daily, some teachers were to have a certificate of competence and the school was to be open for inspection. The result was that in towns it encouraged some local effort to meet the requirements but the people were too poor or destitute, they needed more done for them and less expected of them. Alternatively, in wealthy districts there were more schools than necessary. The emphasis was moved from public necessity to the religious feeling of a locality. Moreover, local exertion depended very much on religious animosities, denominational rivalry, local wealth or poverty, local liberality or local parsimony, local

ignorance and indifference, or local intelligence and public spirit. The result was that the work was overdone often where least required and underdone where most required. In Glasgow, the aided schools were generally crowded together in proportion to the amount of religious rivalry in a district. North of the Clyde 25% of children at school were on the roll of schools aided by the Privy Council, in southern districts, the percentage was only 10.3.¹⁰²

Not only did the Privy Council system not reach the lower sections of the working class, but its generosity only extended to 40% of the total scholars at school in Scotland.¹⁰³ Surprisingly enough pupil-teacher ratios were worse in inspected than non-inspected schools.¹⁰⁴ While the stringency of testing under the Revised Code in the standards was beneficial primarily to the upper working class, the value of annual grants to Glasgow schools was somewhere in the region of £11,825.¹⁰⁵ Therefore, the amount spent on the few was roughly equivalent to 2/- per head per year for every child 5 to 15 years in the city, enough to pay the fees for them all in an inspected school for three months, or mission school for six months.

Even where the church schools were benefiting from the largesse of government financial aid without compulsion, they were still harrassed by the limited school life of a pupil, and especially the disinclination to attend after ten years of age.¹⁰⁶ Only the Catholic

Church gave the minimum of elementary education to its charges in the shortest time with three out of four of its children leaving before eleven years of age.

Nevertheless not all the blame rests with the church, the population was in a deep sleep with regard to education.

With the wealth of documentary evidence favouring a non-denominational education system and compulsory attendance, it was not surprising that the Sunday School teachers, encountered untapped sources in their efforts to patch up the cracks. This early experiment in semi-compulsion relied heavily on ignorance and fear, although it masqueraded under the banner of evangelising the spiritually destitute.

Chapter V

Unbending the Springs of Action:

Evangelicals, Sunday Schools and the Working Class

"The heart of a heartless world; the soul of soulless conditions; it is the opium of the people"¹

a) The Source of the Notion of Religion as Education

Frederich Engels' assertion that the British working class were, by nature, atheistic is now quite famous.² Nevertheless it was a state of affairs that never conflicted entirely with their habit of church going. A study of their sects and religious overtones in their articulation of demands exposes vague assumptions and residual beliefs that have long existed among them. In response to the formality of established church rituals, the working class have been characterised by an abnormal degree of religious indifference. Horace Mann's census of religious worship and education revealed that only one third of the population attended religious worship on census Sunday.³ Even so, later developments like the Labour Church Movement of the 1890's, the Socialist Sunday Schools and the embryonic Labour Party, owed more to the doctrines of Christian Socialism than to Continental Marxism. The Labour Church rooted its claim to orthodoxy on the belief that the emancipation of labour could only be realised so far as men learned both the economic and moral laws of God, while maintaining that the Labour Movement was a religious movement not a

class religion.⁴ Similar appeals to brotherhood, justice and fair play were essential ingredients in capturing the hearts of working men. This may explain the adaptability of institutionalised religion to social and economic changes. Unless socialism was Christianised it would shake Christianity to its foundations.

The lack of identification of religious disquiet with the state and the ruling class has its origins deep in pre-nineteenth century history. In the British Isles, seventeenth century upheavals were fought and won before secular ideology reached the masses. The Declaration of the Rights of Man established itself among the populace in the mantle of the Old Testament prophets and the biblical language of John Bunyan, the Bible, Pilgrim's Progress and Foxe's Book of Martyrs. These were the texts from which labouring men learned the A, B, C of politics and reading. Developments of this kind made it natural for the common people to use religious language to express their first aspirations. Thomas Paine's Age of Reason became the classic statement of nineteenth century working class rationalism. It comes as no surprise therefore, that the American and French Revolutions of the late eighteenth century were the first mass political movements which expressed their ideas and aspirations in terms of a secular rationalism, and not of traditional religion.

An upsurge of interest in recent years in the relationship of churches to the working class has

restricted studies to church attendance and religious sects.⁵ Generally the findings have leant towards the conclusion that the working class population attended church infrequently or not at all and yet they had a continuing strong belief in the sort of church connection that had a stabilising effect on society. Statistical surveys of church attendance, of which the 1851 census was the pioneer, have said little about why in the face of the conflict between church teaching and working class experience, the working class believed and held strong faith in the tenets of religious ideology.

If life in the Victorian industrial city was insecure, brutish and short, religion offered some hope, some heart for the heartless. To ameliorate these harsh conditions minor religious sects sprung into life and inevitably attracted a following. One religious group that was also a national minority was the Roman Catholic Irish. For them religion was a badge of nationality as much as anything.

On the whole, working class sects were designed for the uneducated so that passion and morality in which the most ignorant could compete on equal terms, were the exclusive criteria of faith and salvation. They were religions of the poor not for the poor. Orthodox religion on the other hand dealt with the problems of the poor by evading them, or solving them not for the class, but for the individual through non-secular means or personal salvation. For achieving this end, one

denomination continually upstaged another.

From the point of view of the individual and the 'movement' to which he saw himself belonging, the dialogue with God, Christ or Satan was of paramount importance. In religion, the after life was not only more important but more certain than all the interests of life in the world. Faith in a life to come served not only as a consolation to the poor but also as some emotional compensation for present sufferings and grievances. It was possible not only to imagine the reward of the humble but also to enjoy some revenge upon their oppressors by imagining their torments to come. However, so long as Satan remained undefined or of no fixed class abode, religion condemned working people to a kind of moral civil war between the church and the pub, the wicked and the redeemed, the lost and the saved.

For generations the most commonly available education for the industrial worker came by way of the pulpit and the Sunday Schools. Churches, at least up until the 1870's remained to an extraordinary extent responsible for what the middle and lower class Scotsman in town and country learned and therefore thought. In the previous chapter, we have shown that the established churches were unable to cope with educational problems during the period of rapid industrialisation. The argument now revolves about the role of Sunday Schools in coming to their aid and in rescuing the 'fallen masses.'

"... it is in this area of working class education

- in the facilities and form of education offered - that we can establish the source of the belief in Church Connection"⁶

Sunday Schools were attended mostly by working class children, and for most of the century more children attended them than attended day school, and they enrolled hundreds of thousands who belonged, in later life, to no church. They were a major working class institution in the nineteenth century and the "source of an undefinable, no doubt slight but pervasive influence upon the people at large."⁷ Being evangelical in origin, they flourished best under evangelical auspices, and they may well have been the most important single means by which evangelical Christianity was brought to bear mildly on people who were otherwise out of reach of the churches.

To answer the question why so many working people were ready to submit to church doctrine, we must turn to the curriculum offered through these schools. If demands made by the working class tended to be articulated in religious terms, it was the Sunday Schools that were responsible. When they were the only places where a meagre education could be gained, knowledge and the perception of the world became associated with other worldly beliefs.

Seat rents and other restrictive practices of the church had divided even religion on class lines; so the evangelical had a very important part to play in bridging the gulf between church and flock. The evangelical mind was particularly well adapted to root

out the home heathen from 'Satan's strongholds'. The unsavoury characters of the criminal world whose souls the evangelics wrestled for, formed an inarticulate majority - a sub-political mass made up of superstition, passive irreligious prejudice, and patriotism. The evangelist was driven hard by the notion that if he stood idle for a moment, someone whom he could have saved might perish and begin to burn. They believed the essential part of the Gospel consisted in salvation by faith through the atoning death of Christ.⁸

Between 1800 and 1850 much evangelical activity rested upon the notion that millions were absent from worship because churches were inaccessible to them, therefore many were constantly on the alert for any sign of relapse. They had their worst fears reinforced by the French Revolution when taverns, fairs and any large congregations of people became a nuisance and source of idleness, brawls, and sedition.

In terms of nineteenth century industrialisation, the religious aspect of the Sunday School was of prime importance. It served a no less important function in aiding the capitalist employer with recruitment, training, discipline, and acculturation of labour to the new industrial society.⁹ Above all, the employer was troubled by the problem of how to achieve effective control over their labour supply and the tendency arose for all of them to invoke non-economic sanctions, either

by legal compulsion or discipline, or by dominating the workers who lived inside their township.

The proverbial stick or carrot within the factory was aided by a strict code of moral values outside it. Churches, chapels and Sunday Schools were supported by employers both to encourage moral education in its more usual sense and to inculcate obedience. The code of ethics the employers concentrated on was thus limited. The code left the evangelical movement and other forces outside industry to derive out of the needs of the bourgeoisie a momentum of their own and to further direct and absorb the spiritual energy of the working classes which was largely left untouched by the new discipline.

Dr. Andrew Ure's book, the 'Moral Economy of the Factory System' had a special chapter on religion. It hailed the new medicine for poverty in the form of intensive labour, the subsidiary function of education being to instil methodical habits like attendance to instructions, fulfilment of contracts to time and the sinfulness of embezzling materials.¹⁰ The first and great lesson was that man had to expect his chief happiness not in the present, but in a future state. In many respects it was advice tantamount to ordering the adoption^{a rat} of man to machine, rather than machine to man. Ure's recommendations to mill owners was to organise their moral machinery on equally sound principles with the mechanical. Given the applicability

of his logic, it is surprising that the predominant evangelical attitude was that the function of education began and ended with the moral rescue of children of the poor. Only later did general educational intentions and concern for equipping children for industrial occupations enter their speculations.

In retrospect it is too easy to paint a black picture of the role of churches and Sunday Schools in nineteenth century Scottish education. Inasmuch as they acted in due regard to the wishes of their locality, they became social work agencies, developing mission stations, schools, and tract distribution schemes. They gave hope where there was none, and basic literacy for the educationally hopeless. It is to the minute details of church activity that the bulk of this chapter will be devoted. First we must account for the forgotten significance of the Sunday Schools in working class education particularly in Glasgow, turning later to the mission work that almost certainly forged the collective consciousness of the inarticulate majority at the time.

b) The Sunday School¹¹

Educational conditions in England and Scotland at the turn of the nineteenth century were noticeably different from each other. Whereas England looked to the Sunday Schools for the germ of day school education, Scotland's heart was rooted in the parish schools. Apart from this, both countries responded to

industrialisation with a more than zealous understanding of the bounty to be reaped from religious education en masse.

In England, charity schools declined rapidly after the mid eighteenth century especially when faced with the competition of factory and mill. Other reasons such as the improper and immoral persons in charge, poverty of teachers or bad accommodation persisted in towns, while mill managers opposed the day school because it diminished the supply of child labour to the mill.¹² With disturbances of rural life, growth of cities, drunkenness, and long hours of labour, new societies were founded to reform the manners of parents and children.¹³ Sunday Schools were developed as the cure for dissidents, fostering correct regard for private property.

Adam Crompton, a Methodist paper manufacturer of Littlelever, Lancashire opened a Sunday School at his own expense in 1774-5,¹⁴ others followed suit with schools in Cheshire, Gloucester and Halifax.¹⁵ These were basically uncoordinated efforts. The name of Robert Raikes, a letter press printer of Gloucester is associated with the first full scale efforts to put Sunday Schools on a sound foundation, and as a result, Raikes became the high priest of Sunday School folklore.

Although Raikes was not the founder of Sunday Schools, he advertised the movement via the printed word. In 1757, he took over editorship of the Gloucester Journal from his father and set about campaigning against

bad administration of prisons, becoming convinced that imprisonment was no effective deterrent to crime. He was further convinced of the reformatory value of education, so he sought after a way to prevent criminals being made. Whilst laws enforcing church attendance on Sundays had not been repealed, in many places they were forgotten. Children were likewise forgotten and they took themselves to the country - robbing orchards, stealing farm produce, and those remaining in the town joined in rowdy games accompanied by heavy gambling. It appears that Raikes' first desire was to provide an alternative way of spending the Sunday. Finding well disposed persons in the area, he asked them to instruct children in reading and catechism for 1/- a week.

The greatest hindrance to the spread of religious ideas was the ignorance of the population and improved education could only go hand in hand with religious instruction. Raikes' first school consisted of twenty scholars in four classes of separated sexes under a monitor. Parents were not barred and friendly societies encouraged. So successful were they that by the end of the eighteenth century, Raikes had four schools and he encouraged the idea of week-day schools for reading and writing. When a society was formed to support and encourage Sunday Schools in 1785, within six months £1,000 was received in subscriptions, and in 1787 the society reported 201 affiliated schools with 10,232 children in attendance. By 1800 the society had £4,000

to subsidise local effort.¹⁶

The reason for the expansion of Sunday Schools in England is not hard to find. The end of the eighteenth century was the period of Methodist religious revival. It also marked an upsurge in working class radicalism, combined with a need to read at a time when agencies for popular education were at a low ebb. Unlike Scotland,¹⁷ in England there was unanimity on the part of the Church of England and Dissenters in this field of social work, and Sunday Schools gained the goodwill of the Establishment. As the choice of Sunday did not interfere with the demands of industry, Raikes had his best support from the employers.

It was not long before the authorities lodged their prejudices against anything approaching 'enthusiasm' and compulsory education was seen as a direct attack upon the liberty of the individual. 'Safe' books and tracts had to be peddled to allay the swelling fear of sedition. In other ways, the fear of sedition proved a better incentive to the provision of Sunday Schools by the Established Church than the disinterested desire to provide children with a rudimentary education. But it did not take much for the enemies of popular education to couple Sunday School teaching with open-air preaching. An unsuccessful attempt to eliminate them once and for all, occurred in 1800 when Pitt's cabinet proposed a bill to suppress Sunday teaching as nurseries of sedition. At the same time, evangelicals of Hannah More's stamp

opposed writing in the schools on the grounds that such labour was unfit for the Sabbath. Others, more rational, criticised them as being substitutes for day schools, thereby allowing thousands of children to be sent to work early.¹⁸ Gradually with the connivance of manufacturers, Sunday became a school day.

Despite early objections, the Sunday School Union was formed on July 13th, 1803 and district unions formed in 1814. Almost immediately upon the success of Raikes' scheme, other Sunday Schools were launched in the industrial cities. The Manchester Sunday School movement was formally established on 10th August 1784 with an advertisement in the papers.¹⁹ Likewise Leeds was divided into seven divisions and had 26 schools, 44 or 45 masters and over 2,000 scholars. By 21st September 1784, 25 schools existed in Manchester attended by 1,800 children.²⁰ In a few years, Manchester came to have 36 schools and Salford 6 with over 5,000 scholars on the books,²¹ financed by subscriptions and church collections. Sunday Schools were now much more than second class institutions.

c) Progress in Scotland

The early history of Sabbath Schools in Scotland is obscure, unlike England there has been little recorded in books. A Sabbath School was set up at Norham by a Scottish presbytery minister in 1747 and another in the parish of Simprin even earlier.²² These early schools

were wholly religious in character. The report by the Glasgow Sabbath School Union (G.S.S.U.) of 1841 records probably the first Glasgow Methodist School in the east end of the Gallowgate in 1783, followed a year later with a school - also Methodist - in the High Street. As a result of these developments, a society sprang into being, the 'Society for Managing the Sabbath Schools in Glasgow' formed in 1787 or 1788, supporting twelve schools and 497 scholars under the charge of teachers paid £4 per annum.

If we want to define the period of experiment or 'take-off' for Sabbath Schools in Glasgow, 1790-1820 are the relevant dates. Between these dates many private societies prematurely flourished but within a short time languished for want of funds, adequate teachers²³ or the "extreme barbarity of the inhabitants".²⁴ Although a Glasgow Sabbath School Union was formed in connection with a Sabbath School Union for Scotland in 1816, after three years it failed to send in a report but registered 140 schools and 8,974 scholars.²⁵ James Cleland in a census of schools in the Royalty in 1819 found 106 schools with 158 teachers and 4,668 scholars and 109 schools with 4,747 adult scholars.²⁶ A similar return of 1818 made by one William Glover, recorded 75 schools with 5,742 scholars.²⁷

From 1819 until the census of religious instruction in 1836, we have what may be termed the 'growth to maturity' with experimentation under the guiding hand of

Thomas Chalmers. Later, a more stable union was formed on 26th November 1839 at a meeting of delegates from local Sabbath School societies. From then until the 1870's there follows the high period of church involvement in religious instruction, when an army of teachers with traditional mid-Victorian zeal and evangelical enthusiasm, scoured the city to its very roots to bring all children under the umbrella of church guidance. Let us examine each period in turn.

Because in the experimental phase Sabbath Schools were primarily the brainchild of individuals or private groups, they came under the watchful eye of the Church of Scotland. The General Assembly in 1799 condemned the unqualified vagrant teachers and Sabbath Schools springing up²⁸ on the grounds that they had not signed the oath of allegiance to the King, and the 1694 formula of swearing adherence to the doctrines of the Church. In readiness the Church issued an instruction to presbyteries to send in full reports about all schools of whatever kind within their bounds. Presbyteries traditionally supervised the inspection of such schools within their own bounds but it was not until 1841 that the Assembly formally passed a resolution approving the work of the Sabbath School Union for Scotland, and urged ministers to set up Sabbath Schools in their parishes. The long existing chasm between the Church and the Sabbath School was bemoaned by many.²⁹ There was much ground for

complaint, for the Church only realised its duty to the young after the spiritual destitution of cities became so blatant in the third quarter of the century, and after the Education (Scotland) Act of 1872, forced the Church to step down over its control of religious teaching. All in all, the Church was helpless to stop the experiment.

In 1817 at the end of its first year, in an address to the friends of Sabbath Schools by the Committee of the Sabbath School Union for Scotland, it was found that a correspondence had been opened with 324 schools in all parts of Scotland attended by 22,827 children.³⁰ By 1820 there were double that number, 676 schools and 44,683 children. Edinburgh alone had 87 schools for 5,548 children in connection with the Edinburgh Gratis Sabbath School Society. The last existing report of the Union for 1828 registers correspondence with 1,259 schools and 63,032 scholars.³¹

Around each school tended to revolve a whole network of educational arrangements. Answers to queries of the Committee noted the following figures;³² 676 schools with 1,918 teachers, 140 had 44,683 children - 24,248 were females, 7,466 were adults. Eighty one schools had libraries with 4,888 volumes and of 338 schools, the total annual expense was £870.5s.5d.

In terms of 'propaganda', the Union was not inactive. Books were produced in England and Scotland particularly for Sabbath School libraries, with

contributions from the pen of Hannah More being the most popular. In 1825, there were 169,901 issues from the Union's depository in Edinburgh, this included; reward, library, Bible, Psalm, testament, roll and visitation books, plus attendance tickets, religious tracts and hints to teachers. In all, it made a grand total of 1,395,116³³ issues from the depository since the beginning of the Union. These figures alone give some idea of the magnitude of an enterprise that littered the countryside with its publications and penetrated to the depths of the cities.

While the committee of the Union were optimistic about their successes, it nevertheless almost certainly excluded some schools from their estimates. Many went unreported, their records lost in their seeming obscurity. Yearly the Union regretted the decline of schools started with enthusiasm but lasting only a few years, until either there resulted a lack of teachers, or the novelty of the institution decayed.

It should be emphasised that the exclusive object of Sabbath Schools was the religious instruction of the young of all denominations and it is not surprising that some exaggerated claims were made on their behalf. The Rev. William Proudfoot of Shotts, in a letter sent to the Union³⁴ attributed the lack of local involvement in the disturbances in an around Glasgow to;

"...the habitual preparation of their children for the Sabbath Schools and their being thereby preserved from listening to the

dangerous wicked councils of disaffected men"

Similar pronouncements appeared elsewhere, the report of the Kirriemuir Sabbath School Society declared;³⁵

"They (the people in town) have given way to no improper expressions of discontent; they have betrayed no symptoms of dissaffection to the government or disloyalty to their King and none sought relief in gloomy doctrines of infidelity or scepticism"

At a national level and as a result of urbanisation population increases and migration, religious instruction had not kept pace. Within the field of religious exertion better facilities for cultivating it had diminished, and the old ties between minister and flock, landlord and dependent were broken. Men of learning like the Rev. Thomas Chalmers, the high priest of Scottish evangelicism, had a solution for the problem.

Formerly a minister of the Tron Parish in Glasgow, Chalmers was offered a definite territory as his field of experiment. The large and poor parish of St. John's was cut out of the centralised poor relief of the city and a population of 10,000 was subjected to the influence of his moral economy. Quickly he realised that the town population had outgrown the old established boundaries and he hoped for a revitalised Sabbath School system to step into the breach. In opposition to the established order, he criticised the rancour and contemptuous resistance by some clergymen to the embryo Sabbath Schools and their lay operations.³⁶ His idea based upon his experience at

the Tron parish in 1817-1818, was to establish a 'territorial' or 'local system' of organisation. In fact, this became the blueprint of success and was used extensively by the Free Church of Scotland after 1843 for recruiting working class adherents to religion.

Its expression was locality, as opposed to a merely congregational system. Instead of a church filled from all distances and all parts of the compass, the locality was to be placed under the management of philanthropic men with the intent of creating new customers. The whole enterprise was mapped out in an essay published in 1820 'On the Influence of Locality in Towns'. In that essay a plan was developed not only for exploring and taking a minute survey of the territories of ignorance, but also for sub-dividing these territories into small manageable parts and putting each separate division or part under a vigorous and adequate system of Sabbath School instruction.

A small part of each town with its geographical limits including a population of about three hundred was to be assigned to each teacher, and this limited district or locality to be used as the scene of future labours. The school or place of instruction was to be situated within the locality or in its immediate vicinity. The teacher by himself or along with a friend could then call upon every family belonging to the locality to solicit the attendance of their children, and to the instruction of these children exclusively his

attention was to be confined. He had to follow up each absence on the part of the children with a call or inquiry upon the parents, thus controlling them to regular and continued attendance. He was also to hold frequent intercourse with the families to report to them the progress of the children and to act as their friend and counsellor. An influence was to be kept during the week by means of a small library attached, if possible, to each school. In order to implement the plan with efficiency, it was recommended that the schools band together in one society not exceeding 10-14 schools.³⁷ The plan was a masterly piece of urban ingenuity, a stroke of genius, subtle but effective.

The Sabbath School Union jumped to the call: "... the Local System is immediately to be adopted"³⁸ By 1822 local schemes appeared in Edinburgh, Leith, Glasgow, Dundee, Paisley and all important industrial centres. In Edinburgh on the first visitation of the teacher he;

"...inserts in a book kept for that purpose, their names and occupations - the churches they attended - their children who are, or are not attending Sabbath Schools as well as those who are taught at home and the under fives whether children or adults who can read."³⁹

With this blood transfusion, the weakly Sabbath Schools, entered upon a growth to maturity.

Previously, general schools had collected children from various quarters, many belonging to families of a particular congregation, but all of parents who valued

Sabbath School instruction. The local plan embraced many such children also; but the teachers repeated friendly calls, persuaded the greatest proportion of the ignorant and neglected children to attend Sabbath School.

"The general schools are mostly filled with the better children, whilst in the local schools are principally found the poorest and most neglected children."⁴⁰

In the parish of St. Johns in 1819, no more than one child in ten was in attendance at the general Sabbath Schools. Within twelve months of the local system being established by Chalmers, it brought out 1,100 additional scholars. When the general system remained almost stationary as to numbers from 1819-1832, the local system added to the Sabbath Schools of Glasgow nearly 7,000 children.⁴¹ Under private management, the local Sabbath Schools had not generally succeeded, either languishing from lack of funds or teachers. Only where they were taken up as part of the work of congregations did they succeed.

Lord Kerry's statistics of education in England and Wales did not include evidence of Sabbath Schools in Scotland, neither did the nine volume report of the commissioners of religious instruction in Scotland in 1837, give anything like adequate account for them. They only testified to the flourishing state of schools connected with congregations. Nevertheless, the seeds

of success had been ^{laid} by Chalmers in the twenties, all that remained now was to co-ordinate effort.

d) Those Halcyon Years for Sabbath School Instruction

The Union of Sabbath Schools in Glasgow, a multi-denominational body, was formed on 26th November 1839 at the first meeting of local delegates.⁴² As a body it had arisen from the need to co-ordinate intelligence and publish adequate statistics, and a laudible desire to improve teaching;

"Only recently that conviction of a certain degree of preparation being necessary has very widely spread".⁴³

Previously, Sabbath Schools were built upon the belief that any Christian who knows the Bible and was respectable in character, was good enough to teach, "We are now beginning to find out that this was all a mistake"⁴⁴ Inevitably its committee consisted of local dignitaries and men troubled by the prevailing want of education.

With Victorian ingenuity they set about collecting and collating data to measure success against intentions. The result was that a vast amount of quite important detail was left for posterity. Every year from 1839 onwards, local reports on classes, teachers, scholars, libraries, week-day schools, and missionary collections was translated into a general abstract. The results for the forty year period 1839-79 appear in Appendix Table 5(IA). The bearing of this data upon organisation is very important, and as the statistics

reveal the nature of this institution in relation to the Glasgow working class, it deserves no inconsiderable comment.

From a glance at the table, it is noticeable that this period was one of success and expansion, punctuated with only short periods of stagnation. From the outset the Union boosted Sunday work with week-day classes and adult courses. They collected pence for foreign missions and supplemented their literature with school libraries. In 1839 there were 37 societies with 401 schools, by 1879 that number rose to 269 societies with 571 schools. Teachers had expanded from 905 to 8,844, regardless of the ever present problem of rapid turnover. Scholars numbered 17,000 in 1839 and in 1880 there were 84,000.

Compared with secular day schools, the ratio of teacher to pupils was very good - approximately one teacher to every eleven scholars. What is more startling is the percentage of Glasgow children aged 5-15 years that were on the roll of Sabbath Schools, or at least attending them for some part of their lives. The estimates of proportions are necessarily difficult to make, as some societies were optimistic, perhaps falsifying their numbers for the sake of effect. Deducting from the total of scholars for all years 25%, to account for those under six years and above 16 years, columns 4 and 5 (Table 5 (IB)) give the approximate upper and lower limits of Sabbath School attendance for

the whole Glasgow population 5 to 15 years from 1840 to 1880.

Column 4 based upon the scholars on the roll reveals that in 1839 27% of the child population of 5 to 15 years, were at Glasgow Sabbath Schools, in 1851 this rose to 47%, 50% in 1865 and by 1880 it was 60%. The average attendance at school being 75% of those on the roll gives, in the forty year period, a consistent 40% of the child population. This is indeed revealing, for we can with some justification, say that in 1860 between 40-50% of children were attenders.

This is a figure of the total child population including those children of the upper classes. The Union, in its report of 1858 calculated that 17,000 Glasgow children between 5 and 15 years, or 23%, were unavailable for Sabbath Schools on account of their connection with the upper classes and with Roman Catholic faiths. Such schools were considered inappropriate for upper class children as they regularly had good schooling or attended church with their parents. To a large extent it is not justifiable to exclude all Roman Catholics as many attended the Protestant schools, but if we deduct 15% as representing the ineligible, then a more realistic estimate of the working class population at Sabbath Schools is possible.

The appropriate columns 2 and 3 (Table 5 (IC)) give these estimates. In 1851 between 45 and 55 of every 100 working class children were at schools,

between 48 and 61 in 1861, between 45 and 60 in 1871 and by 1879 between 53 and 70 in a hundred, attended more or less regularly.

In fact, the Sabbath School was a well established and expanding working class institution. Without exaggeration, it can be inferred that this was the greatest source of all religious information and the most informative influence on literacy, far outweighing the influences of day school, and probably the intellectual home of the lumpen proletariat, or at least, the lower sections of the working class. In this matter Glasgow was not unrepresentative. In an education census prepared by Ayr Sabbath School teachers in May 1848,⁴⁵ 53% of children 6 to 16 years attended Sabbath Schools in Ayr, 59% in Newton and 62% in Wallacetown. Similarly, in Edinburgh in 1855, 1,000 teachers took a census of religious instruction and discovered that 55,000 children were at school.⁴⁶

In the meantime, the Church of Scotland and the Free Church were issuing policy statements from afar and trying to assess the state of such schools within their own presbyteries. Reports from presbyteries, even at their best, were poorly prepared and indecisive. Nevertheless, the Established Church saw its role as vigilant watchdog over education and tried to exercise its authority, somewhat unsuccessfully, over the schools within its bounds.⁴⁷

Few lay teachers administered classes, most were

conducted by ministers or associates for a part of the year, but the Church was powerless to control infringements of this rule and in numerous cases Sunday education was left entirely in the hands of young men whose qualifications for office were rarely questioned. It was a situation noticeably acute in towns. In Glasgow, few schools were examined as the population was so vast and unrecorded. Even during the 1840's when Sabbath School attendance was requested in presbytery reports, in most cases they were omitted, or only Sabbath scholars not at week-day schools were registered. In spite of this, the zeal and activity of individual kirk sessions competed favourably in their school provision with non-conformist congregations,⁴⁸ so much so that in 1870 the Education Committee declared;⁴⁹

"...Kirk Sessions have rendered it unnecessary for the Committee to institute or aid schools in the large towns"

All along Established Church schools had been entered in statistics of local Unions as in Glasgow. It was only the habitual failure of the Church to recognise non-Church control of schools that blinded them to the degree of co-operation locally by all bodies. No doubt Glasgow presbytery reports were made up by a different breed of men from those actively engaged in the process of educating the populace.

Like the Established Church, the Free Church had similar difficulties in statistical computation, although they were far more precocious in outlook,

declaring in 1851;⁵⁰

"The Sabbath School system was employed by Knox and was introduced into Scotland long before the days of Raikes, and it has now been so long in use that it may be allowed to be as much a necessity as that of ragged schools."

If the 1851 census figures are to be believed, their feverish activity accumulated more schools and scholars than any other denomination.⁵¹ Quite naturally, they were anxious to see the Sabbath school of the country worked by Church courts as part of its regular machinery, hence pride of place went to the few congregations with seventy plus teachers and upwards of one thousand scholars as at St. Johns Church, Glasgow.⁵²

Given these estimates, how did the Glasgow Sabbath School Union at each period see its role, and how did it respond to industrial and educational changes?

Early on in the history of the Glasgow Union, the need for supplementary education schemes pressed themselves into public consciousness. Libraries grew up around the schools, some societies had a separate small library for each school, others had a general library for the use of all their schools together, until libraries grew from their early offerings of 13,000 volumes to 70,000 by the 1880's.

Illiteracy was always a pressing problem, where the schools tried to plumb the lower depths of poverty in Glasgow book knowledge became a minor factor in the campaign for education. Gradually adult and week-day

classes in reading and writing completed the Sunday evening lesson and teachers came to believe that youths would grow up in a state of ignorance unless taught free of charge. It was a development that found much opposition and was, in a way a compromise, as objections were met with Sunday evening instruction on the grounds that it was not proper employment for the day of holy rest.⁵³ Acceptance of the principle was unpalatable, but inevitable, given the objective of seeking out the 'home heathens' among the sunken masses. Time proved the usefulness of the adult class, when teachers were hard to recruit or the turnover was rapid due to death or summertime, it was easier to nurture new candidates with the fold of the adult class. Adult classes were intended for females yet the universal complaint was not lack of female teachers who were employed with comparative ease, but of male teachers. Alternatively, if adults did not become teachers, they could be recruited into the army of tract distributors that distributed 'useful' or non-seditious literature to the public.

Various subsidiary schemes were tried by some societies but often failed to gain a foothold. A Sabbath School register was used in 1841⁵⁴ to enter the names of worthy scholars able to execute in practice the lessons taught in school. It was hoped the register would also confer benefits on those requiring the services of young persons by employing children only

who could be disposed to regard religious principle as the only sure foundation of correct moral conduct. Indifference on the part of teachers did little to aid the scheme.

One scheme that met with considerable success was the 'bait' given to secure maximum attendance. A large proportion of schools used attendance tickets in addition to religious tracts, and distributed the Glasgow 'Monthly Visitor'. Several societies gave small books as premiums to those who obtained the greatest number of tickets or were most deserving.⁵⁵ As the century progressed and the schools became more ambitious, annual soirees, visits to the seaside, steamboat or railway excursions, or free dinner parties, punctuated the yearly routine. Then the teachers complained of irregular attendance by those who enjoyed the opportunity to visit many Sabbath Schools to attend only the social functions.

In addition to registers and attendance tickets, the emphasis was put upon consolidating activity and strengthening respectability. A class was opened for instructing school teachers in the Tron Church Session House, and a class for sacred music opened in Stockwell Street.⁵⁶ Attempts were made to get a Sabbath School magazine for Scotland and regular monthly meeting instituted to discuss topics and merits of Sabbath School education. A plan was suggested to the Union by the Rev. George Scott, Chaplain of the North Prison to

attempt the reform of liberated juvenile delinquents.⁵⁷ The implication being that the Sabbath Schools might prevent some of the good impressions learned in prison being lost. Invariably the ideas came to nothing.

It was the period following the Disruption that most effort was made to recruit scholars and expand activity. The events of 1843 affected the condition of many societies connected with the Union - breaking up some, dividing others and temporarily paralysing many of their operations. Consideration was made of the propriety of established district Sabbath School unions, as the Union had become large and unwieldy with the great expansion in schools,⁵⁸ and a resolution was passed at the 1845 annual meeting to get all evangelical churches and societies, to co-operate in bringing the entire juvenile population under religious instruction by means of Sabbath Schools.⁵⁹

Now the Union saw itself as a rescue organisation and the plan was to visit systematically all families with an invitation to children to attend if they were not already doing so. Scholars could be drawn from any locality but it was desired that visitors work extensively on their own. This plan prompted the educational survey of Glasgow with the proviso that the Union needed to double its numbers. The survey revealed that only one third of Glasgow children had religious instruction. The Union attributed this partly to the lack of teachers, the lack of cheap and

convenient schools, and still more, to ignorance, carelessness, and immorality of parents.⁶⁰ It knew that many of those reported as being able to read could do so very imperfectly and parents were more apt to speak favourably of thier childrens' achievements than was consistent with the truth.

Allowing for those instructed at home, who were Roman Catholic, or whose parents refused aid, the Union was appalled by the figures. Its response was to send to every minister a statement asking them to bring before their congregations the facts and make it a subject of sermons,⁶¹ and more strategically to appoint five district unions in order to further divide the labour and delegate responsibility to the local level.⁶² The principle was to keep the increase in scholars in line with the rise in population and from this point in time until the mid 1860's, great emphasis was placed upon such directives. With great diligence and sacrifice, the Union accomplished their aim.

The results are indeed impressive as the statistics have shown, and one is prompted to imagine what the statistics would have been if there were more teachers and greater church help. More than once, the reports reveal disappointment with the efforts of the church who organisationally stood aloof from the Sabbath School cause;

"Should Sabbath Schools by feebleness and inadequacy disappoint the hopes which are so fondly cherished of it, it is on the church that the responsibility of that failure must rest"⁶³

One important result of the sub-division of responsibility for Sabbath School organisation was that local investigations were made into the conditions of the working class, and unions in their reports corroborated the convictions of their directors, that the most destitute had to be reached through education. When they were reached, poor school accommodation probably contributed more to ill health than the contagion of the streets.

Further problems were to be found in raising funds, a problem that appeared annually due to fluctuating donations. In some cases in a small or poor congregation, it was impossible to carry on operations, without teachers forming committees of ways and means. In 1853, the directors of the Union ascertained the total expense of all Sabbath Schools was £1,300 per annum or £2.10s. for each school and 8d. per scholar.⁶⁴ The English schools in larger cities were better off financially, because they had accommodation and pecuniary support equal to that of any of their benevolent institutions. In Scotland it was certainly education on the cheap.

If we are to make a demarcation line between the second and third phases of Sabbath School development in Glasgow, it must be placed about the early 1870's when the state overtook the work of churches in providing education for the people. After this,

Sabbath Schools had to rethink their role in society, come to terms with a new conception of childhood and take greater concern with the spiritual welfare of youth outside of the formal education system.

In a sense, the evangelical or charitable ethos was lost, but a balancing factor was the flowering of new schemes to bring youth under the wing of the church, and initiate a more disciplined proletariat into well ordered habits and behaviour. To meet these demands a revitalised interest arose in organisations like William Smith's Boys Brigade, the Church Lads' Brigade, and Bands of Hope, which discouraged respectable working class boys from touching the demon drink. Another object was to attract adolescents, until they entered the communicant membership of the church. Thrift, sobriety and church attendance were at a premium, and the seeds for these movements were sown in the 1850's and 1860's with penny savings banks, young men's institutes, children's churches⁶⁵ and apprentice schools.

After 1870 the sponsoring of institutions⁶⁶ pushed all churches into the direction of more positive social work and helped to give the Sabbath School an institutional respectability for supplementing the work of the day school. The strength of this new union witnessed the enlargement of classes to cater for a much enlarged city population.⁶⁷

e) Missions and Missionaries

If Sabbath School education fostered a belief consistent with the sacraments of baptism and marriage, it was the zealous inspiration of like minded Victorian men that made the local congregations' commitment to social reform a reality. Around every active congregation clustered a whole miscellany of agencies like photons round a nucleus. The Sabbath Schools played a minor, but not unimportant role, but they were not alone in efforts to sink shafts of 'light' to the lowest depths of humanity. A church would have its own mission agents on loan from the city mission, its young mens' institutions, week-day classes, tract distributors, bible women, dorcas societies for the distribution of clothing, and missionary collections. Each in its individual way drew the working class under the umbrella of the church to its spiritual elevation, or on the simplest plane encouraged basic literacy.

Conversion of the individual was the obvious prelude to a total change in the nature of society. Any attempt to change society or the individual without achieving spiritual conversion was tantamount to failure.

Presbyterianism concentrated missionary efforts on the assumption that conversion must precede and take precedence over all other activities. The difficulty was in the point of locality. Missions of the Established Church operated within the parish boundary,

whereas the Free Church abandoned the parish as the administration unit in 1843, consequently administration gaps loomed large in certain areas.

In an effort to solve the problem the Free Church devised two types of mission. First, the district mission - compared with the established parish mission in a destitute area nearby the church. Secondly, the City Mission operated a number of preaching stations in destitute areas under the jurisdiction of the Free Presbytery i.e. in areas too far from the local church to tackle adequately, or where no church existed. The aim was to bring the destitute to a preaching station, then cream off the converts into a communion with the parent church.⁶⁸ When a parish minister found an unbridged gap between himself and the spiritually destitute, the function of the missionary was to establish psychological and physical contact with the unredeemed. Thus, there was a close association in the mind between spiritual conversion and economic improvement. In this the Free Church effort was greater than the Established Church, partly from a desire to make up for deficiencies resulting from the abandonment of the parish unit, but also in the war against the Establishment.

Because it was unusual for men of lower class birth to be admitted to the clergy, the missionary activity of working class laymen was sought. The germ of their organisation was the City Mission, founded in

1826 by Mr. David Naismith⁶⁹ for prompting the religious interests of the poor. Its ground for action was the 62,000 adults souls who were debarred from the sanctuary arising from want of church accommodation,⁷⁰ and within a year, eight agents were employed.

It was soon clear to the agents that evangelicising the masses was an educational problem;

"Your agents state that a vast number of the poor have never been taught to read - they know nothing about the Bible"⁷¹

The common means of religious instruction was either shut out from the poor and ignorant through illiteracy, or they excluded themselves from it through inability to pay for seats or want of proper clothing.

Unable to feed the body, agents endeavoured to feed the mind through the medium of the religious tract and regular visitations of fairs. The tracts were distributed to each house, read, and returned on the agents return visit. Each year, thousands of tracts were distributed or put into circulation, thereby acting as a powerful medium of religious instruction. We have no evidence to prove whether they were taken seriously by the recipients, but they must have acted as a vehicle for literacy. Each tract would perhaps pass through several hands.

Besides visiting families, the hours of labour of the agents were taken up in holding meetings, visiting the sick and infirm, administering at the sick bed, or chasing children into schools. The agents became a

regular visitor in a locality like the rent collector, ready for anyone who wished to take out an insurance policy against hellfire and damnation.

The turnover of agents and high mortality explains why there was great reluctance on behalf of middle class ministers to visit the slums. As a satisfying occupation it was not altogether successful, nor life enhancing, as this agent's comments make plain on visiting a father and son with their own provision for the after life;⁷²

"...a whole volley of the most scurrilous language burst forth ... the most of which was copied from Paine's Age of Reason. They terminated by saying that they had no time to spend upon such nonsense - that the Bible should be rewritten ... for it was all nonsense"

As a medium for the establishment of schools, they had a little more direct success. Adult schools, particularly successful with female operatives, were started and agents found teachers in districts who were willing to instruct poor children. Later schools for neglected chimney sweeps were opened. When overtures were made in 1832 to employers in the city to conduct factory mission stations, employers gave their unqualified assent, and one day a week workers were collected together and a practical discourse was given by a missionary.⁷³ By 1836 in twelve factories, 1,500 workers were so evangelised.⁷⁴

Although the whole scheme within a few years suffered fluctuations in attendance, and ultimate decline, in one factory employing 500 men the proprietors agreed that no men were to receive employment who did

not consent to pay the sum necessary for school education, whether they sent their children or not. The success of this venture however, remains obscure.⁷⁵

Two other Glasgow societies sprang into being in the 1830's which supplemented or duplicated the work of the City Mission - the Glasgow Christian Institution Society of 1832, and the Glasgow Society for Monthly Distribution of Tracts which commenced operations in July 1832. The Christian Instruction Society allocated to itself areas that the City Mission neglected, dividing them into sections consisting of between twenty and forty families, visited by one or two agents. As places of meeting included preaching stations and school rooms, a link was forged in the minds of the working class between religion and education.

Of all the organisations, the Society for the Distribution of Tracts was the most ambitious in the area of propaganda, for its stated object was supplying gratuitously to every family in the city and suburbs, one tract per month. The city was re-divided into areas of six to eight hundred families, over each was a superintendent who sub-divided districts into fifty families under a distributor. Each distributor within twenty one days of the beginning of each month canvassed every family with a tract, a truly ingenious piece of organisation. In three years 1832 to 1835, they circulated 1,044,618 tracts by an average of 500

distributors, costing in all £1,019 13s. 3d.⁷⁶

As a supplement to lay tract distribution much in the way of educational experiment was left to prominent individuals. Men like David Stow, Thomas Chalmers, the Rev. Robert Buchanan and Rev. D. MacColl, contributed to the folklore of evangelicalism.⁷⁷ These men heightened the consciousness of the upper classes for whom the districts in which the wynds belonged was a terra incognita. They also played upon the notion of education as an antidote to crime and a means of making safe society from some bloody revolution;

"...as the nations of continental Europe have so recently exhibited, that we may learn how unwise and how unsafe it is to leave unquenched those smouldering fires which are still spreading beneath our feet." 78

Convinced that a school for ragged children was doing nothing to remove the source of evil, only adding to its numbers ad infinitum, Robert Buchanan's kirk session and congregation, gave £80-90 annually to a large and flourishing school in the east part of the Tron Parish. Subsequently £400 was given to establish a school in an old Candle Manufactory in the Old Wynd, Glasgow, and one in a hay loft in the Bridgegate. The setting for such activity really coincides with the inauguration by Buchanan of the Free Church Building Society and Chalmer's Scheme for church extension throughout the country. Chalmers foresaw the day when churches would be near the people with seat rents suited to their pockets and districts containing no more than

2,000 souls.

Meanwhile another man, the Rev. D. MacColl, was tunnelling busily in the Old Wynd and Bridgegate. He adapted readily to conditions, built a stone pulpit outside his church, and began a crusade that resulted in workplace meetings, mission kitchens and a children's church.⁷⁹ He hoped to train children in church going habits and thus bridge the chasm between the school and the church.

Without a doubt, over a longer period of sustained enthusiasm such adventures as we have outlined left a deep imprint on the minds of the masses. Even if it generally failed to convert the home heathen, or fell on stony ground, it did nurture an inward desire for education on the part of the poor, while from its many sidelines it convinced them outright that education meant religious knowledge. It was in the wynds among the lumpen proletariat that religious men were able to measure their success if only because their inhabitants had a life span too short to have the insights of religion refuted by experience.

f) Wellington Street United Presbyterian Church

What we have commented on are isolated instances, they do not give the texture of education in a way that complies with the notion of spiritual destitution. To study the church, Sabbath Schools, and evangelicalism as a social system, we must investigate the work of one church.

I have selected the Wellington Street United Presbyterian Church in Glasgow over a twenty year period 1842 to 1862, with a view to investigating its growing involvement in mission work. This church was selected because surviving records are intact. Although not itself located in a working class district, its field of operations was in Finnieston and Anderston, just above the quay, an area that is now entirely obliterated.

The community had a large proportion of the population connected with cotton manufacture as cotton spinners, power and hand-loom weavers. There were a number of iron founders and machine makers, the remainder being mariners or shop keepers.⁸⁰ Like all quayside communities, it had its residue of lodgers and perambulating criminal population, but the movement of families was for short distances, therefore a whole lifetime would be spent in the area and perhaps succeeding generations would live there too. Industry was close at hand so geographical movement was unnecessary.⁸¹ As an area, it had the ingredients of a strong working class community.

Two distinct communities were associated with the work of the Wellington Street Church. On the one hand there was the congregation with its separate committees for ways and means and overseas missions, its regular church-going habits, and its exclusive congregational Sabbath School for children of church-going parents. On the other was the 'fallen', 'submerged', or 'sunken'

masses, that seemed to engulf the church and confirm their worst fears about the sinfulness of man.

As early as 1840 the Church contributed to the support of the British and Foreign Bible Society, supporting a school in Nigg, home mission stations, and paid the salaries of two city missionaries.⁸² The most direct contribution the congregation made towards the education of poor working class children was relief through the dorcas society in the form of clothing. It enabled them to attend more regularly Sunday Schools, when previously, lack of adequate clothing had been used as an excuse for absence. Complementary to this was the Society for Missionary and Religious Purposes which collected money at the church door for Sabbath Schools, missions, missionaries and libraries.

The two city missionaries were by far the most important persons and acted as essential links between communities, congregation and clientele. Each one was employed four hours each day except Saturday, in visiting from house to house and conducting one meeting on the Sabbath evening and one one Wednesday. They formed the umbilical cord between the church and its flock, but more importantly, they were a feudal tie between spiritual landlord and tenant, a responsibility that had now been commuted and devolved upon different individuals. What is more the respectable among the congregation were too afraid of contamination, physical or mental, to conduct the operation of separation themselves.

The missionaries' work was well thought out, methodical and systematic. Each was given a district in Anderston⁸³ which was further sub-divided into seven sections, a week being devoted to each and a meeting held in convenient houses every Wednesday.⁸⁴ One missionary had the foresight to get the regular churchgoers to come in everyday dress so as not to discourage the poorest from coming.⁸⁵ He was responsible for organising the distribution of tracts, sending children to school, tending to the spiritual needs of the dying, and sending back regular intelligence to his employers.

The missionaries worked in strict collaboration with the Sabbath Schools, a society for their promotion had only been established in the early 1840's. The information they gathered on conditions and spiritual destitution brought about the idea of an enlarged and systematic effort for the education of the destitute and neglected. In furtherance of their aim, the ladies of the congregation established a day school in Bishop Street in January 1845, at which the elements of an English education and religious instruction was communicated gratuitously or at a small fee.⁸⁶ When the same educational destitution was found to prevail in the southern districts of Anderston, the young men of the congregation formed another school in Cheapside Street.

Confirmation of the necessity to expand endeavours were given in numerous censuses conducted by the missionaries; "...of 681 children between 6 and 16,

283 or 43% are not attending Sabbath Schools".⁸⁷ In one part of Finnieston, as an instance of the state of the whole, out of 280 children between 6 and 16 years "...only one hundred attended week-day schools and 110 or about 40% are attending Sabbath Schools".⁸⁸ A bigger education survey was made of the district from West Campbell Street to Bishop Street, there children between 6 and 16 years numbered 1,790, of these 523 or 64% were at week-day school, 519 or 64% at Sabbath School.⁸⁹ Compared with the 1846 survey when only 54% were at week-day schools and 58% at Sabbath Schools, this shows considerable success. These surveys prompted the establishment of a Finnieston Education Association and strengthened the arm of the church's newly formed body the 'Wellington Street Church Education Association', having as an object the diffusion of education among the ignorant and destitute.

By 1850, the Association had three mission schools in Bishop Street, Cheapside Street, Finnieston Street and night schools, each having a sewing class for girls, besides ten Christian Instruction Agents, seventeen thriving Sabbath Schools with 59 classes and one thousand scholars, all under the oversight of three city missionaries. There was some ground for self-congratulation when Mr. Brown, the teacher declared at the 1847 Annual General Meeting;⁹⁰

"It is gratifying to pass along Bishop Street during school hours. There is scarcely to be seen, from one end to the other a child fit for school. All have found their way to it"

All this was on the credit side, the debit side was more serious, and is illustrative of the optimum capacity reached by purely philanthropic agencies. In 1848, the Bishop Street sewing school was discontinued on account of shortage of funds from the juvenile missionary society. The Education Committee also changed its admission policy. It only granted free education when parents were not able to educate their children without aid, thereby refusing many worthy applicants.⁹¹ They were forced into this decision since there was no proper accommodation and teachers feared the health hazard and loss of efficiency. One year later the committee introduced a scale of fees proportionate to educational requirements. The results were obvious, the exaction of fees was equivalent to the expulsion of many children. By reducing expenditure and raising income from fees, the schools were still in debt.⁹² Only gradually with a clientele more willing to pay higher fees was normality restored, while the prevalence of disease and high prices obliged some modest parents, who could not ask for education gratis, to withdraw their children from the school.

Despite such setbacks in the 1860's the Christian Instruction Society and its tract distribution flourished.⁹³ A young men's mutual improvement society was set up; Cheapside and Bishop Street schools moved to a new mission chapel and school house in Piccadilly Street, and a Bishop Street savings bank

came into existence.⁹⁴

In no sense did any of the agencies stand alone, they were integrated by the belief common to the Victorian frame of mind, that to withdraw from activity was to see some arrant sinner burn in hell. The communities of church and neighbourhood were and overlapping. If the working class showed a degree of religious indifference, it was not because this ingredient was absent in their education. Wellington Street mission schools were not alone in the Anderston district, other schools existed, some receiving government aid, but mission schools suffered more the vicissitudes of economic changes, while insisting upon that curious Victorian idea that a thing is only valued if it is paid for.

The Sabbath mission Schools, essentially the cubicles of the religious psyche, spoke eloquently to the congregations about the conditions of the poor and oppressed, and the bitter cry echoed back with the new discipline of thrift, trust in the Lord, and the iridescent light of mutual improvement. However, reclamation was no easy task;

"You see the pitiable mother and the ragged weans, worse than ragged, naked or crouching by the dying embers. That woman, so fluent in scripture in your presence and so prolific in curses in your absence now an arrant sinner - was once a Sabbath School teacher and a member of a Christian church."⁹⁵

g) Sunday School - Saviour or Unwanted Guest?

Evangelicalism, the Christian missions, bible and religious tract societies, influenced the Scottish working class, at least those who were receptive to it, in many fundamental ways, forming a decisive link between things temporal and spiritual. The Sabbath School was the great institutional lever with which they forced the dead weight of educational stagnation into motion.

Far from conceiving that the spread of daily education would cause the disappearance of the Sabbath School, as having done its work, its friends anticipated with hope a period of secular enlightenment in which, relieved from mere obligatory labour, they could give their individual energies to their especial object - religious instruction. Horace Mann was charmed by their virtues into seduction;⁹⁶

"We perceive indeed the great improvement which has taken place within the past half century in the manners of the people - their increased attachment to the cause of order and sobriety... the share which Sunday Schools have taken in effecting this desirable result is probably to a great extent unrecognised."

Whether it was Sabbath Schools alone that warrant these favours cannot be thoroughly assessed, for in England and Scotland the schools had slightly different connotations but not so different as is often assumed. In terms of attendance times, the English Sunday School was very much a Sunday morning affair leading on to church attendance, whereas in Scotland it tended to be a Sabbath evening school. The three R's achieved widespread importance in the south, but initially only reading was influential in Scotland.

For various reasons, James Kay-Shuttleworth, with mainly English experience, was convinced they had "...contributed to save this country from some great convulsion"⁹⁷ a popular view held by those who feared a revolution from below. For England, without a rational system of popular education, it looked to the Sunday Schools for guidance, duly expanding their educational work to become midwives at the birth of the English elementary day school. Even as late as 1854, the Church of Scotland still persisted in viewing them as some necessary evil, permissible for England, but an unusual outgrowth from Scotland's contamination with its neighbour;

"Were all parents what they ought to be, and did they all discharge their parental duties aright, there would be no need of Sabbath Schools or rather there would be one in every house" ⁹⁸

The custom of catechising the children and servants of the family on Sabbath evening in Scotland persisted long in the minds of Church dignitaries, even when a quick glance into the murky depths of industrial life concluded to the contrary.

The revelations of the 1851 census produced statistics of Scotland roughly equivalent to those of England. The opponents of Sabbath Schools contended that in England, there were large numbers of children whose whole education was to be acquired at them, hence statistics of English towns showed that the number of Sunday Scholars were greater than day scholars.⁹⁹ In England, in 1851, this was true, Sunday scholars outnumbered day scholars by

263, 264 - 11.6% of the population were at day school and 13.4% were at Sunday Schools.¹⁰⁰ Scotland's figure was 12.76% at day school and 10.1% at Sabbath School. For a country boasting of a national education system, this was not an outstanding record.

In the case of Glasgow where social conditions were intolerable, their popularity was inevitable. Lanarkshire alone had more than any other county and a greater percentage of total pupils.¹⁰¹ Not only were Unions in large cities able to compare favourable returns within their umbrella organisations, but the individual religious groups within these multi-denominational organisations¹⁰² were favoured by the wave of enthusiasm for Sunday education, that reached its peak in the forties and fifties.¹⁰³ Some fifteen years later the report on the state of education in Glasgow by J. Greig and T. Harvey for the Argyll Commission in 1866, gives a total of 41,248 on the roll of day scholars.¹⁰⁴ The Glasgow Sabbath School Union's roll for that year numbers 60,464,¹⁰⁵ thereby reinforcing the view that however different education in Scotland may have been in the country districts, in its towns it was comparable to Manchester, Stockport or Liverpool.

If Glasgow's statistics are representative, the evangelical movement was a huge success as a recruiting agency, although most statistics show an underestimation of actual attendances, as many societies failed to report.

The greatest setback was short-term attendance or the failing of a school through death or disillusionment by a teacher. It would be no exaggeration to say that some 80% of children attended schools on Sunday at least some time in their lives even if it was for only a period of weeks.

For the participants and organisers, the work of such a school must have appeared like a crusade in the face of the hostile influence of home and workshop. An attitude quite unintelligible to earlier generations, as prior to the nineteenth century, the educational agency was apprenticeship, the school merely served a preparatory function for most townspeople. As apprenticeship fell sharply in the eighteenth century, and bonds of blood duties or rights waned, education was left in the hands of the school master by default. The concept of child saving began to take over first for the soul, later for the social environment.¹⁰⁶.

Nonetheless, the social pioneers had their difficulties. Ignorance or intemperance were great obstacles to success - some parents just could not be pressured into parting with their children for Sunday service, so attendance fluctuated wildly in winter according to the demands for child labour. Alternatively, a deficiency in teachers and very poor accommodation could not compete with the gin shop or penny gaff. When the operations of the City Improvement Trust and Union Railway Company became effective, there resulted vast

migrations of children to other areas or away from schools altogether causing confusion or abandonment of some organisations.¹⁰⁷

In assessing the contribution made to nineteenth century Scottish education by the Sabbath School, we must balance their advantages and disadvantages - the disadvantages first.

Evidence given before a commission on child labour was not at all flattering to Sunday Schools.¹⁰⁸ Children went to the local school but they did not like it, for they were closely confined in ill ventilated apartments, and with long hours of weekly labour recreation was sought for. Not surprisingly, with a dearth of adequate accommodation, the school was detrimental to children's health and diseases could spread easily. More serious was the accusation that they were subservient to the purposes of manufacturers;

"I have observed that the whole tenor of their instruction, almost all the lectures that are delivered and almost every tract that issues from those schools has a tendency to reconcile the children to their condition in the mills." ¹⁰⁹

Where patrons or trustees of schools were manufacturers or had connections with industry, children could easily be reconciled to excessive labour and taught to consider Sunday as the most appropriate time to receive instruction.

No doubt such schools filled a very necessary gap in the education of working children but their popularity must have retarded the development of a more natural

educational system and delayed the passing of compulsory educational legislation. Apart from their missionary intentions, they could not begin to provide a service under the early nineteenth century conditions of factory employment, at least until the labour of the workers was contracted, as increasing hours of labour made rest on Sunday a necessity.

As far as their academic worth was concerned this was very low in most cases. Educationally, they were makeshift, a miserable substitute for day schools. Writing was deemed inappropriate for Sunday, the hours were short, and learning was often by rote or by heart, with little time given for explanation. Attendance was irregular but there was a good staff/pupil ratio, with eleven pupils per teacher in Scotland.¹¹⁰

As to the quality of the teachers themselves, it has been implied that they included men and women of substance and selected on the grounds of moral or religious conduct, whose co-operation and friendship fostered trust between different social classes,¹¹¹ but this was indeed very doubtful. In an industrial centre like Glasgow where disease or contagion was rampant, willing middle class hands were in short supply. Turn-over of teachers was rapid and the Glasgow Sabbath School Union realised that the best teachers were recruited from the ranks of the Sabbath scholars themselves, hardened to the conditions of their kinfolk. If knowledge of

the miseries of the poor was transmitted to the more prosperous classes, it was more likely to be through the medium of an intermediary like a missionary agent employed for that purpose.

The Rev. Dr. Robert Lee, in evidence before the Argyll Commission voiced the opinion that religious instruction in the schools was overtaught with children being bribed to attend with food and outings.¹¹² Often the insistence on clean linen, washed hands and face and hair combed, may have barred those most in need of assistance.

An important consequence was regularly overlooked, the Rev. G.S. Bull summed it up nicely; 113

"...as soon as they learn to read the precepts of Christianity, they must see that in many respects, the system of labour under which they are brought up is at variance with anything like the golden rule of doing unto others as you would that they should do to you, and I do really believe that a very great deal of the disregard of Christianity or in other words, the infidelity which unhappily abounds in the manufacturing districts, may be traced to the system under which the population is found to exist and under which they have to get their bread."

It was this kind of realisation that formed the basis of the socialist Sunday Schools in Britain and it was no coincidence that Glasgow, with its flourishing Sabbath School system, should have fostered the first socialist schools.¹¹⁴

On the credit side, the school was a focus for the young and old. Many had good lending libraries, savings banks and cold water armies of the temperance movement.

As Sunday became associated in the minds of many as the day of religious instruction, it made the day schools' task of secular education that much easier, while forcing through the idea of education, free and universal into public prominence. With Sabbath School buildings often the first buildings in which day schools were conducted, for many masters it was the only teaching practice they got. For the scholars, they provided an alternative authority to the foreman of the mill and mine, teaching habits of industry and sobriety without having to contend with the twin evils of early withdrawal and irregular attendance. Their impact on literacy was no less important. Children's appetite for reading was encouraged by the volumes of Sarah Trimmer and Hannah More in the library, both writers helping to create the beginning of an English literature for children.

By 1870 the Sabbath Schools pedagogical role reached its zenith. Educationally, they had kept the home fires burning on the working class hearth, being not only a vast educational instrument but a great social fact, - an adaptable institutional plan for reforming morals and so securing property, while acting as a charity to satisfy the Christian instinct of benevolence. The combination of these two aspects is the key to their attractiveness - a short cut to the social millenium by bridging a gap that the heirarchy of the established church were too busy to notice.

In combination with all the evangelical bodies united to save the spiritually destitute, the Sabbath School played its part in the inner revolution of Scottish life, perhaps helping to bring the country through the social perils of industrialisation. Many working people turned out for its offerings, most for the consolation it offered rather than out of educational commitment. Yet no ideology is wholly absorbed by its adherents, and the Sabbath School broke down in practice in a myriad ways under the criticism of impulses and experiences.

Like all concepts of education based upon notions of religion, these schools only served the deprived by solving the problems for the individual, they could not break through the circle of transmitted educational deprivation. Probably they would not have pretended to such intentions, preferring only to apologise for it. In this respect their role was essentially ameliorative. What they could not eradicate was neatly ingrained into the life history of generations of the industrial population, and revealed itself in the inherited facets of employment, crime, and poverty.

To elaborate upon the notion of transmitted educational deprivation being passed from one generation to the next, the following chapters study three particular predicaments. They are vignettes, or portraits of social life not enclosed in any definite border.

Chapter VI

Study I - Education of the Employed Child

a) Introduction - Three States of Existence

By mid century Britain had moved from its mainly rural origins to industrial pre-eminence. Innovations in agriculture such as enclosures, with the attendant improvement in techniques and the application of fertilisers, greatly added to the yield of agriculture and created surpluses to feed the town population. The lowland industrial belt of Scotland and particularly the western counties of Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, Ayrshire, and Dumbartonshire monopolised the growth in manufacture, and hedged out textiles to make way for shipbuilding, mining, iron and steel.

Because cheap labour had always been plentiful as a result of internal migration, children with their dexterity and youth were in demand. During the era of factory legislation and regulation, some of the grosser excesses of early exploitation were gradually ironed out to stabilise the demand for child labour, while the centralisation of authority on industrial matters, and the strengthening of the civil service bureaucracy, created an avalanche of census and statistical data on industrial development.

If we analyse the decennial census material from 1851 to 1891, we get a long term perspective from which to view the relative importance of school attendance,

employment and unemployment for the whole child population. The result appearing in Appendix Table 6(I) is a breakdown of scholars, employed children, and the unoccupied, for the second half of the nineteenth century.

A glance at the Table serves to show that the numbers at school increased from 44% of the total 5 to 15 years, to 80% of the total in 1891, and one would expect an increase after the 1880's when the compulsory provisions of the 1872 Education (Scotland) Act started to take effect. Furthermore in line with school population increases, the numbers unoccupied exhibit a sharp decline from the 1851 figure of 43%, to 10% in 1891. Although the 1872 Act really capitalised on an already upward trend in school attendance, the number employed remained relatively constant at an average of 10.41% over the 50 years. The graph of these results appears to be proof enough that the 1872 Act drew into the schools the unoccupied at the same time as the numbers employed were constant.

Almost all those children employed found jobs after they were 10 years old and the employment of boys and girls over 10 years only declined after 1871, with total child employment regaining its pre-1872 level in the 1890's. Given that these employed children were nearly always to be found in factory work, regulated or unregulated, in shops or running errands, it is probable that they came from that section of the working class below the skilled

strata, where their additional income was necessary to enhance subsistence and respectability.

A more detailed explanation of the 1851 census in Appendix Tables 6(II) and 6(III) conveys graphically the overlapping links between employment and unemployment of child labour.

In 1851 the Scottish counties with above average male and female employment tend to coincide.¹ As the occupational census was conducted early in the year, it does not highlight seasonal fluctuations due to harvests in the north or border regions. Nevertheless, the south predominates over the sparsely populated northern regions, and Lanark, Dumbarton and Renfrewshire are conspicuously in evidence as high employment regions.² Girls naturally tend to be less in evidence in schools and in paid employment, as their labour was required for domestic duties, or needed for attending to the wants of the rich. Idleness was more difficult to define in the case of a girl, for much of their lifetime consisted of unpaid work undertaken before the age of fifteen, when they left home for the mill or domestic service.

Turning to boys, we find that in Lanarkshire, Dumbartonshire and Renfrewshire, approximately two out of ten boys were at school, one fifth were engaged in employment, and four out of ten were idle.³ If you were under 10 years, you were either at school or home; no other course was open for two generations.

Where employment opportunities were high, increased employment was likely to take more from the unoccupied sector than from the school, resulting in less idleness for children of a certain sub-stratum over the age range 5 to 15 years. Poor youths, but probably the children of the streets or street arabs, benefitted most from increased employment prospects when they were young as hawking, match selling, bone and rag gathering, were their exclusive right. Yet a ceiling seems to have been established upon the maximum school attendance possible under the voluntary principle,⁴ particularly where the opportunity cost of school attendance and the attractions of income weeded out the marginal school attenders.

The actual social composition of the idle is based upon conjecture. The employed and the unemployed were overlapping groups, being selected mainly from those portions of the working class sufficiently near poverty income to make the payment of school fees over a period of time merely an inward aspiration. Annually, thousands of children would enter employment later to be recruited into the reserve army of labour when times were bad. Many were professional paupers or beggars, inmates of reformatories or institutions catering specifically for the lumpen proletariat, or those prone to crime and high mortality. When they found employment all was well, otherwise odd periods would be sustained at school to collect the necessary charity.

By and large, parents were often afraid to reveal their sources of income to the census enumerators, as those classified as not occupied, not at school and not working for wages, were likely to be engaged in running errands or seasonal and casual work. For these reasons the relative incidence of employment and unemployment would be continually shifting. Only when hosts of semi-skilled and unskilled labouring jobs appeared in the seventies and eighties, did these people disappear along with their rookeries.

For those who already had the luck or ill luck to be employed, uncontrollable shifts in the economy gave emphasis to commercial and manufacturing enterprises at the expense primarily of agriculture. In the thirty years from 1861 onwards, the professions were excluded to all but a privileged one or two percent of children. Agriculture slipped from being the employer of 1 in 5 of the youth to 1 in 12,⁵ and by 1890 manufacturing and its ancillary employments could proudly boast of employing 60% of the youth of Scotland.

Within the employed group itself, a number of separate occupations syphoned off between half and three quarters of the employable.⁶ The successes of textile production even up to 1900 made it the main employer in Scotland. In 1851 one third of children were involved with textile production in some way, notoriously a greater employer of female than male labour. When it slowly declined in importance, specialisation like hemp

and jute manufacture in Dundee revitalised it.

Not surprisingly, domestic service was the best alternative to the mill for girls, and encouraged them in their thousands. Mining, an all male activity, was popular, while iron and steel and labouring took in a small but constant number of boys. The most non-sex biased employment was errand running or its institutionalised equivalent, the messenger/porter. Obviously city dwelling offered more stable opportunities, consequently messengering became the rapidly advancing occupation for youngsters.

Turning to Lanarkshire we find that the county was under-represented in agricultural employment, possibly because of the attraction of Glasgow,⁷ but over-represented in minor employments like errand running. Jobs in textile factories seem to have followed the national trend until after 1871, when their attractiveness fell away sharply. After the factory regulation acts began to bite, hemp and jute production for the factory half-timers became the sole outlet. Here mining, iron and steel and labouring were particularly boy's occupations and girls monopolised domestic service.

If Lanarkshire is representative of industrial areas, the town districts of Scotland were even more so. Towns dominated in taking over three quarters of those engaged in messengering and portering, but as a percentage of those employed in towns, they rated lower in textile production and iron and steel for boys, and domestic service for girls. Three out of four employed

girls were likely to take one of these two options,⁸ and due to their labour being in such demand, towns were the best employers of females, to the great disadvantage no doubt of their education. By the end of the period, those girls pushed out of mill work took to service or the now over-abundant shops. Boys were more likely to be taken on as carters, printers, plumbers, bakers, grocers or tailors that expanded to meet the available market.⁹ Much later in the century concealed employment in the form of after school hours shop work hampered education and was an impediment against which the school boards fought a losing battle.

Generally the education of the employed youth was a little recognised problem except where government regulations affected factories. Employment in subsidiary industries was more often than not concealed and very little inquired after until the era of the school boards. However this must not stop us looking at three areas of industry separately - the factories, workshops and unregulated trades - to gain some insight into the important influence that employment had on moulding educational requirements for the true working class children.

Where employment was a transmitted feature of many children's lives and a measure of formal educational deprivation, moves to combine education and work will explain how successfully the cycle was broken.

b) Employment and the Concept of Childhood

So little recognised were the problems of employing youth that the concept of childhood did not exist, certainly not as a universal condition requiring special consideration, for a greater part of the nineteenth century. In this country the development of this privileged status starts with the 1872 Act itself, as before that the child was undisputably its father's chattel. J.S. Mill, writing in 1858 in his essay On Liberty made the point that;¹⁰

"...one would almost think that a man's children were supposed to be literally and not metaphysically part of himself, so jealous is opinion of the smallest inference of law with his absolute and exclusive control over them."

Children were considered on the same basis as adults and being less physically able and experienced, they were seen as an inferior section of society. The source of this inferiority lay in the work situation. As long as the main economic support of the community was agriculture, indifferently scientific and only crudely mechanised, life could never be far from subsistence level. Even when surpluses existed, poor communication and inefficient transport, and scant means of food preservation limited proper utilisation.

In such an economy, every member of the community was required to work to provide food. Traditionally, much of agriculture was arranged in family groups. Around the strongest and most skilled member, the father, there grew up widely used, time-honoured patterns of work which needed the children. Dominance of the father

became a patriarchal formula given considerable authority in the Old Testament. This was renewed over the years by other religious and legal sanctions to encase the situation in a dogma of obedience to the father, who had complete responsibility for his children; in return for which he had the benefits of their service. Children were clearly seen as part of the labour force supporting the farm. A large number of children, especially if they were healthy boys, were an asset to the family work group. When industrialisation had altered this situation by dispersing the family workers over several locations, the depressed state of labour in most trades made it necessary for all to bring in a wage in order to make ends meet.

As the 1872 Act became fully implemented, this condition was radically altered, because attendance at school removed children from the family work group. Not only that, but straight away a child was changed from an asset as a wage earner to a debit, because school fees and other expenses had to be met. The situation, as the Victorians saw it, had been expressed in the English Newcastle Committee Report of 1861;¹¹

"If the wages of a child's labour are necessary either to keep the parents from the poor rates, or to relieve the pressure of the severe and bitter poverty, it is better that it should go to work at the earliest age at which it can bear the physical exertion than it should remain at school."

Of all the manifest considerations of the way education could be offered to the mass of the children after 1870, the possibility of extending the Factory Acts was paramount. It is easily forgotten that the real problem as it presented itself, was concerned with the rescue of children from premature wage earning, therefore more importance can be attached to the education clauses outlined in these measures than to the trifling grants approved after 1833. The urgent problem which had been stirring the public mind for many years was the oppression of children by the demands of industry for their labour; so much so, that British elementary education right up until the education act of 1918, has been shaped predominantly by this issue;

"The school has been established and maintained just because attendance at school is presented as the only alternative to over pressure in the factory and on the farm." 12

Indirectly the parent was often to blame as he was the operative who employed the child.

The first Factory Act, the act of 1802, demanded that factory apprentices;¹³

"...be instructed in some part of every working day for the first four years at least... in the usual laws of work in reading, writing and arithmetic."

provided and paid by the employer in some room within the factory set apart for that purpose. As is well known, this act and those which followed in 1819, 1825 and 1831,¹⁴ achieved little result. They were limited

in application, not one penny being voted for their execution and no steps being taken for their enforcement except by piling one more duty on the already overloaded shoulders of the magistrates. Only the act of 1833 accepted the doctrine that earning and learning were inseparable and not incompatible.

c) Conditions - Physical and Educational, of Working Population in Textiles

At the heart of the first industrial revolution was the revolution of the textile industry, later superseded by iron and steel manufacture. It first depended on the application of mechanisation to the industry, and later to the application of steam power combined with a supply of cheap labour.

The work of children and adults was closely integrated, the running of the machines depending absolutely on the subtle fingers of the boys and girls who as a rule, were employed and paid by the adult operators themselves. During the early years, they had been engaged in large numbers because they were amenable to the discipline of the factory, but as the improved design of machinery simplified the various processes, they took the place of adults in many departments of manufacture. It was this rigid inter-dependence of children and adults that made it so difficult to reform industrial conditions during the early years of the nineteenth century. Children were grossly overworked

but it was considered impossible to limit their hours without either limiting the hours of the adults in like measure, or throwing the whole industry out of gear.

Vast fortunes had been invested in factories, requiring round the clock working. For this reason, it was customary to work extremely long hours, adults and children being often occupied in the mills for thirteen or more hours a day. So great was the demand for juvenile labour that very young children were frequently employed, and the close confinement in overheated rooms had disastrous results, both physically and mentally.

Agitation for some reform in the 1830's through the Ten Hours Movement had initially turned attention specifically towards the textile mills. Once moves were made in the direction of reform subsequent commissions investigated agriculture and mines, and a multiplicity of manufacturing processes where children were employed.

Prominent among those who clamoured for a Ten Hours Bill was Michael Thomas Sadler, member for Newark and a close friend of Richard Oastler, a man fired by religious conviction and reforming zeal. On 15th December, 1821 Sadler sought leave to introduce a Ten Hours Bill.¹⁵ It was later referred to a Select Committee under Sadler himself, and in 43 days examined 89 witnesses to whom it put 11,618 questions.¹⁶ No report was issued but the minutes of evidence published in 1832 created a sensation,¹⁷ because many comments in his report were not flattering. Even Engels, no friend of the owners,

declared him¹⁸ "...betrayed by his noble enthusiasm into the most distorted and erroneous statements" However, it prompted evidence and counter-evidence on industrial conditions that throws really valuable light upon the relationship between education and the work experience of the Scottish working classes. Textile factories gave the lead and provided the evidence for future legislation.

d) Conditions in Textile Factories

Witnesses before Sadler's Committee testified to the injurious effect manufacturing was having on school education. The Rev. A.L. Gordon, minister in the Church of Scotland Aberdeen, saw the advantage that Scotland had in a decent and religious education lessening before his very eyes.¹⁹ He saw the long hours and especially night work leading to Sabbath desecration and immorality. William Smith, cotton spinner of Glasgow, shared his views and advocated measures for regulating the hours of labour of children;²⁰

Q.6054 "Are you of the opinion that education in Scotland is retrograding in proportion to population?"

A "Yes, I think so; and I am greatly afraid that the fame that Scotland has hitherto got for education will fast diminish if this factory system continues unregulated."

More important than mere impressions were the actual conditions of the mills. The heat often reached 84°-86° Fahrenheit and three quarters of the hands were children

and young persons. Three child 'piecers' were allocated to one spinner. A majority of the children were female orphans, being preferred because they bore factory labour better than the male, or simply for strike breaking reasons. When a child has to travel 8 to 10 miles per day within a confined space, the labour became more arduous than that of adults as it imposed a greater degree of labour on those least capable of sustaining it; "Nothing can be a greater barrier in the way of education than being overlaboured"²¹

Within an industry there was great differentiation in the labour of children, as in fine and coarse spinning mills. In the latter, the mules (little fine yarn spun upon throstles) 'draw' three times more often than in the former in the proportion of 3 to 1. In Glasgow, there were approximately 1,100 spinners with three children or young persons to each.²² Upon the average of twelve hours work per day, was added the imposition of meal-hour machine cleaning and lost time that had to be made up at night. It was in the spinners' interest to overlabor the children because of piece-work common in the industry.²³

Children after these long hours, often a total of fourteen and under the stress of repetition, evaded school and sought fresh air and amusement, so defeating the beneficent intervention of the laws of Scotland for working class education. To counteract absence from school, many evening schools in Glasgow were set up for

one or two hours per night, some paid for by manufacturers themselves. Few people contradicted the evidence that they were of very little benefit to sleepy children after long hours of labour.

The three main impediments to education then were; the fluctuations in hours of labour, leading to partial or entire exclusion from school; the night-school keepers not certain of having scholars; and the making up for lost time which interfered with night schools. Under the conditions prevailing in the 1830's, attendance at evening school made time for necessary rest too short, consequently those incapable through fatigue from attending evening school, went to Sabbath School. Ironically, a school that added to the hours of confinement must have been detrimental to health and increased physical suffering.

John Dawson's evidence set the seal on the attention Sadler's committee took to the factory system. Deprived of education while working in a mill, he did not read anything to speak of until he went to the workhouse;²⁴

Q. "So that the workhouse is quite a desirable place compared with the factory?"

A. "Yes it is, I felt very thankful I even went there for the bit of scholarship I got!"

Lord Ashley was persuaded to take over Sadler's work and presented a Bill to the Commons on 5th March 1833, in many respects similar to Sadler's Bill but with

no mention of education. To correct omissions a commission was moved for on 3rd April 1833, to collect information in the manufacturing districts.

The responsibility for framing the report²⁵ was in the hands of Edwin Chadwick, Thomas Southwark Smith and Thomas Tooke; all Benthamites. Although self-interest was their guiding principle they believed that self-interest should be enlightened. Provision had therefore to be made for education and it was for this reason that J. Raeburn endeavoured in 1833 to secure the establishment of a universal system of education based on the Prussian model. His effort proved abortive, but nevertheless, a limited scheme of education applicable to factory children only, was shortly to become possible of achievement.

The evidence of this commission was more reliable, more thorough and discriminating but it did not contradict Sadler's conclusions. Generally, in Scotland the hours worked were twelve or twelve and a half and in several districts not less than thirteen. Irregularity of hours was common where children cleaned machinery. In Scotland and the eastern districts of England, the harshest treatment of children took place in obscure mills;

"The expressions of fatigue are the strongest and most constant on the part of the young children employed in factories in Scotland, because there the ordinary hours of work are in general, longer by an hour or an hour and a half than factories in England." 26

Confinement in factories at an early age produced fatigue incompatible with schooling;

"This is more uniformly the declaration of the children in the factories in Scotland than in those of England." 27

"...Scotland, where the education of the children is neglected to a far greater extent than is commonly believed where only a very small number can write; where though perhaps the majority can read, many can not; and where with some honourable exceptions, it seems certain that the care once bestowed on the instruction of the young has ceased to be exemplary." 28

The inspector of factories James Stuart complied with this finding and attributed the want of education to long hours of labour.²⁹

In simple terms, the problem for the commissions was that children employed in factories formed a considerable proportion of the infant population. The numbers increased in proportion to the increase of population employed in the manufacturing industry, and in consequence of improvements in machinery, more work was thrown upon the children to the displacement of adult labour. Grounds for legislative interference were based upon the revised notion that children were not free labour or free agents, inasmuch as they were put out to hire for wages appropriated by their parents. The effects of labour during long hours in a great number of cases led to permanent deterioration of the physical constitution and the partial or entire exclusion (by reason of excessive fatigue) from the means of obtaining

adequate education, and acquiring useful habits or of profiting by these means when afforded. In short, a deficiency of mental instruction and moral culture prevailed. The dangers were now attributable rather to the excessive length of the working day than to the conditions under which the children were employed, for the newer factories were on the whole better designed.

The report recommended not a new code of law, but a system of checks and controls that could render the existing law effective. It recommended that no child under nine years should be employed in a factory and that until the commencement of the fourteenth year, the hours of labour during any day should not exceed eight, night work between 10.00 pm and 5.00 am being forbidden. The commissioners justified their choice of the fourteenth year as the time at which protection should end on the grounds that at this age the period of childhood had ceased, puberty established, and the physical frame capable of more protracted labour. At fourteen, they were no longer treated as children because of an important change in their domestic condition, namely, the withholding of part of the wages, the payment of lodging and clothing, and the making of free contracts outside the complete control of parents.

If the labour of children was to be limited to eight hours a day, some scheme had to be evolved to enable adults to work the normal hours. Employment of children in relays or shifts was the answer. One set

of children were employed in the morning, one in the evening. It virtually annulled any Factory Act by allowing labour to be reharnessed at changing stations, but limiting the hours of adults was unthinkable and seemed the greater evil. Even the operatives feared that if children's labour was cut, adults might follow.

The most far-reaching and revolutionary proposals concerned the provision of education for factory children. Three or four hours in every day for education was proposed. This they believed would prevent the employment of the same child in two different factories on the same day, and it better qualified the persons so educated to adapt themselves to other employments if trade so desired and factory inspectors, surgeons to verify age, and certificates of attendance were the corollaries to such improvements.

However, a contradiction in the commissioners' educational thinking was voiced by Dr. Mitchell.³⁰ He saw the meagre wages of the very young not with regret but as satisfactory, as there was little loss to parents if withdrawn altogether from factories and sent to receive education. Mitchell failed to realise that it was because wages were so low that they had to be kept in employment or withdrawn only at great loss.

In the final analysis, employers kept workers at subsistence level for long hours and as a result their perception of educational opportunity was related to the fear that to educate children meant a reduction of hours, with an attendant fall in wages and style of life.

Later circumstances revealed that increased adult wages would free the lifetime of children from labour time and contribute to the enhancement of their education.

e) Education Legislation in the Textile Industry

The government bill was ready on 9th August 1833, prepared by Edwin Chadwick. The Lords accepted the bill but they introduced a modification that was to have the most unfortunate consequences. Chadwick, realising that the educational provision could not possibly be effective unless schools were available in factory districts, had inserted a clause giving the inspectors power to establish such schools where necessary, by a deduction from wages and an employer's contribution. The Marquis of Salisbury procured the rejection of this clause.

On 29th August 1833, the act to regulate the labour of children and young persons in the mills and factories of the United Kingdom received the royal assent.³¹ The preamble stated that the hours of children and young persons ought to be regulated for there were great numbers employed and their working hours were longer than was desirable, due regard being had to their health and means of education.

Accordingly, it was provided that no person under 18 years of age employed in or about any cotton, woollen, worsted, hemp, flax, tow, linen, or silken mill or factory where steam, water, or other mechanical power was used, was to work at night.³² No child was to be employed under nine years of age, but an exception was made in favour of silk mills, which were still allowed

to engage children regardless of their age.³³

No child under 11 was to work more than nine hours in any day and more than 48 in any one week. Silk mills again were exempt with 10 hour maximum in any one day. Further, certificates were required of appearance and age. Children restricted to 48 hours labour a week were required to attend some school which was either to be chosen by the parents or appointed by the inspector in the event of the parents default. In the latter case, the employer was authorised to deduct from the child's weekly wages a penny in the shilling.³⁴ Each Monday morning the child was to produce a voucher from the schoolmaster certifying that he had attended school for at least two hours a day and six days of the preceding week. If additional schools were needed, the inspector was authorised to establish them.³⁵

Following the precedent of former legislation, the act was strictly limited in its scope for it protected fully only the children and young persons employed in the manufacturing processes stated. Lace factories were excluded and silk mills were afforded only a half measure of protection for they were outside the scope of the educational clauses. Also, the act did not apply to mechanics, artisans, or labourers repairing machinery on premises.

Despite these provisos the foundations for all other legislation dealing with the protection of the employed working class child had been secured, it only mattered now that the upper limit of childhood be raised from 10 to 13 years.

f) Enforcement and Effects of Legislation

The immediate effects of the legislation were felt from many sources. Parents opposed it because they wished to keep the additional income of their children.³⁶ This opposition was two sided, because parents were the guardians and employers of labour. 'Little piecers' in the spring mills worked alongside the 'big piecer' and spinner, repairing the threads when they broke and sweeping up the fluff that accumulated under the mule. The spinner himself actually engaged and paid the 'little piecer', so that the employer of the child was himself a worker. A similar system was used in weaving where the child was employed as a 'tenter' and was actually engaged by the adult weaver.

Having the child to keep an eye on the loom and report breakages and stoppages enabled the weaver to work more looms and earn higher piece-rates. Spinners and weavers who had to pay a higher wage to a young person to replace the child were not so keen on child legislation. From the child's point of view, he resented the extra two hours on the working day. Employers objected to the interruption of daily routine, and the obligation to provide accommodation and teachers when other employers were exempt. Worst of all, operatives believed that it was a substitute for Ashley's Ten Hours Bill which would have limited working hours of all children and young persons up to

18 years, to 10 hours a day, thereby limiting hours of adults who could not work without them.

School attendance clauses were most detested.³⁷ With the commercial crisis of 1836 and the resulting trade depression, dislocation and unemployment spread and some blamed the act for these conditions.³⁸ In protest, evasions in the early years took the form of forged or purchased certificates of attendance, or the cheapest and most inadequate of schools selected by parents. Throughout their districts, the inspectors found the greatest reluctance to carry out the educational provisions of the act.

Inevitably, all children whose hours were restricted to 48 hours a week were dismissed. After the passing of the act, the number of employed children did not double but halved, and many children had on this account entered unregulated occupations.³⁹ Unless it provided for the remaining half a very good education, its benefits from an educational point of view were doubtful. The constant complaint of inspectors was that there was no stipulation that anything should be learnt by the child and accordingly, little was learned. It was stated by a member in the House of Commons on 22nd June 1837⁴⁰ that the Factory Act in Glasgow was a dead letter "observed by nobody and violated by everybody."

The inspector of factories in Scotland was James Stuart of Dunearn.⁴¹ The factories in his district

were composed of two classes, those carried on in large towns and populous villages; Glasgow, Dundee, Carlisle, Belfast, Paisley, Aberdeen, and the large scale rural situations; at Catrine, New Lanark, Blantyre, Duntocher, and the second class flax, woollen and two factories of trifling size in remote villages, or singly on small streams in secluded parts of the country. Stuart found the act with few exceptions substantially in force.⁴² Instances of deviation were merely owing to negligence or carelessness in securing certificates of attendance. He therefore "abstained from coercive measures"⁴³ yet found that in the smaller, more remote factories where factory work was combined with work in the fields, the act was inoperative. He concluded that; ⁴⁴

"The Act ... has obviously had a very considerable effect in diminishing the number of children of that age employed in the factories in this district. Few of them are now employed in the factories in Glasgow, Belfast, Carlisle, Dundee and all placed where it is not difficult from the state of the population to procure young persons of 13 years of age and upwards."

Only at Deanston, Catrine, New Lanark, Staley, and other great works in the country dependent on the population attached to their own factories, were children still employed in equal numbers as before.

The combination of evasions and the depressed state of the cotton trade contributed significantly to the meagre employment of 1,532 children between 9 and 13

years who were subject to factory legislation in 1836.⁴⁵ Four witnesses before the Commission on Combinations made an accusation to the effect that the provisions of the Factory Act neither were, nor could be, enforced, particularly where a cotton spinner overlooked the law to keep his machine moving, and children worked more than eight hours.⁴⁶ Although usually favourable to the employers, Stuart found these allegations difficult to refute and one year later in 1839, the weight of a government enquiry was thrown behind their support.

The government enquiry into the effects of the educational provisions of the Factory Act⁴⁷ amounted to a condemnation of the whole system of learning and earning. The conclusions had implications for the future of educational legislation and set a pattern little amended until 1918 when half-time employment was declining. They may be summarised thus;

- 1) Unless good schools were established at public expense, the educational clauses would continue to be ineffective. The law did not subject mill owners to the expense of providing schools.
- 2) It was impossible to enforce school attendance universally or to secure that adequate education was provided for those who did attend, particularly when silk mills were outside the scope of the measures or power to establish schools.
- 3) Schooling clauses were resented by children, employers, and parents.

- 4) Vouchers for school attendance were forged or purchased.
- 5) In large towns of Scotland, children below 13 were replaced by young persons who were in abundance.

Schools connected to factories were exclusively assigned to factories in country districts. Hence the principle design of Factory Acts to prevent children and young persons being over worked was a failure.

Fortunately, Leonard Horner the most prominent among the inspectorate was optimistic;

"I hail the Factory Act as the first legislative step in this country towards that to which, under some modification or other, we must sooner or later come - a compulsory education for all classes." 48

"I am convinced of the paramount necessity of legislative interference to prevent the children in factories from growing up in a state of barbarous ignorance." 49

All inspectors opposed the view of the incompatibility of education and work and offered the remedy of a modified relay system such as that used successfully in inspector Saunders' district.⁵⁰ Inspector Howell on the other hand sponsored the half-time system, arguing that it afforded greater security against over working of children and gave longer periods for education at a regular time daily.⁵¹ Howell's view won the day and the half-time children were to be born out of new legislation in 1844.

The years that intervened between the passing of Althorpe's Act in 1833 and the Factories Regulation Act of 1844, were not devoid of legislation and by no means barren, for they enabled those who were charged with the duty of enforcing the law to test and where necessary, to modify the machinery upon which success was, in the ultimate resort, dependent. It took the new Home Secretary, Sir James Graham, to introduce the bills that produced the Act of 1844 upon which all employment for the next half century was based.⁵²

New limitations were now imposed on the working hours of children, young persons and women. No child was to be employed in a factory for more than six and a half hours in any one day. A child who had been employed in a factory before noon was not in any circumstances to work after 1.00 pm the same day unless the system of alternate days was introduced.⁵³ The factory occupier might employ children for 10 hours a day on three alternative days of the week, provided they did not work successive days. The provisions of the act of 1833 were to continue in force so far as the hours of young persons were concerned, and women above 18 years also were to be restricted to 12 hours a day,⁵⁴ with the minimum age for employment to be reduced to eight.

Perhaps the most dramatic of reforms was the

inauguration of the half-time system whereby children were required to attend school during half the day as a condition of being employed in the factory, the other half. It ensured that the parent or the person having the direct benefit from the child's wages, caused him to attend school three hours each day, Monday to Friday between 8.00 am and 6.00 pm. Those working in the morning were required to attend for $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours only between the first day of November and the last day of February. Again attendance at school was to be certified by a schoolmaster whose voucher was to be obtained each Monday by the mill occupier, and full time working and adulthood began at 13 years.

As a principle, the half-time education system was not new,⁵⁵ it was the basis of the medieval system of guild apprenticeship, developed in Britain in the eleventh and twelfth centuries and reaching a peak in the fourteenth century. It never completely died out but lived on in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries schools of industry, to later become the spark for the rapid spread of factory schools after 1844.⁵⁶

g) The First Children's Employment Commission

Those who were engaged in the branches of the textile industry as yet free from legislative control, had for some years been convinced that it could only be

a matter of time before they too became subject to regulation. Silk manufacturers could already employ children of any age for 10 hours a day without provision for their education, while occupiers of lace factories remained outside the scope of the Factory Acts altogether. Again, when the depression lifted in 1842, the volume of trade increased and a steadily growing number of hands had found employment in the mills. Expansion of trade and legislative control were obviously not incompatible, and there was at least a prima facie justification for enquiry into the possibility of enlarging the sphere of regulation.

The call for extension of legislation was taken up by Lord Ashley. On 4th August 1840, he moved that a commission of enquiry be set up. The commissioners were appointed⁵⁷ and the report of the Children's Employment Commission on Trade and Manufacturers published on 30th January 1843.⁵⁸ On the whole, it had a cool reception and with one or two exceptions, the industries received little attention until two decades had elapsed and the work of the inquiry had then to be done over again. Nevertheless it exposed gross irregularities.

Hours of work, physical environment and apprenticeship were oppressive hindrances to education and worst of all was parental control. In a majority of trades

and manufactures, children were hired and paid by the work people. When employers exercised little or no superintendence or control over them, some workshops employed more children under 13 years than over. Only in glass and paper were engagements made directly with proprietors, while in the lace, hosiery and glove trades a greater part of the youngest were employed by parents and worked in workshops disguised as schools. It was precisely in those activities where children were hired and paid by the worker that hours of work were longest and labour performed under the most oppressive circumstances. Parents and adults expressed the greatest apprehension lest any legislative restrictions should deprive the parents of the profits of their children's labour whether conducted at home or in a small manufactory. Workmen in fact make the worst employers.

By way of illustration, detailed reference need only be made to calico printing and bleaching both of which later came under legislative control.

In printfields in the west of Scotland the young apprentice 'teerer' was employed by block printers and machine men by the piece usually for the day, and dismissal was at an hour's notice. Approximately 5,000 children were employed as 'teerers' in Scotland's printfields, usually girls, some as young as five and a half years but mostly nine years of age.



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Printing depended on season, taste and fashion, and hours as long as 38 in succession were found in Glasgow.⁵⁹ The teerer's job was to spread colour upon a sieve to which a block was placed at regular intervals to receive the colour every time it was applied to the cloth. Alternative work for the 'teerer' included hooking and lashing, a process undertaken by passing damp pieces through a succession of tin rollers. Weekly earnings averaged 2/- to 2/6d a week and begging in streets during meal hours was not uncommon. The only printfields in Scotland that attached a school to the works for an hour a day was at Campsie.⁶⁰ Optimistically it tried to recruit to school only those properly educated but found difficulty in obtaining recruits on that condition.⁶¹

A 'teerer' style apprenticeship became known as 'taking in' of scholars and was the practice in most trades. Either the worker was bound by legal indenture at 14 for 10 years, or bound without prescribed legal forms until 21. Though apprenticeship could begin at seven, there was often nothing in the trade requiring skill. In the east of Scotland a master nailer would apprentice a boy at seven for seven years, mainly from the House of Refuge, he in all respects being treated as a pauper. Thus apprenticeship became a way to maximise profit and avoid responsibility for children's intellectual welfare. Another ploy was to open a spinning school for gratis education in which a parent could make money out of a child's labour on condition of working for a mistress.

Bleaching was usually conducted in the country at bleachfields. It was wholly monopolised by girls from certain spots in the highlands, working 11 to 13 hours a day, stacking, cleaning and drying muslins which had been bleached by a bleaching liquid.

Upon investigating these trades the commission dedicated much space to the effects of early labour on the state of education and moral condition.⁶² Thomas Tancred the inspector, spoke favourably of the general qualifications of the teachers in schools for the poorer classes in Scotland and the abundance of schools in certain districts.⁶³ Of the means of instruction that were provided, the children of the manual population in general, and those employed in the printfields in particular, could not benefit themselves, on account of the early age at which they were removed from school, and the long hours of their daily labour. The evidence showed that a majority employed in calico printing in the west of Scotland could read but few could write.⁶⁴

Quite naturally, the universal complaint of schoolmasters was that they were deprived of children at an age too early to have been able to make any satisfactory progress, and that children were forced to begin reading at an age when they ought to have been in an infant school. In part this resulted from the great ambition of most parents for the mechanical art of

reading although the efficiency of the teachers, Thomas Tancred noted, was beyond reproach.⁶⁵ It was not surprising that the usual salve to the conscience both of masters of works and parents was the evening school.

As for the education of girls, early labour meant they were virtually unqualified for domestic or household duties and quite unmanageable. Only a few could afford the luck of Hugh Kennedy aged 10 or James Gibson aged 15. Kennedy had been 'drawing' a year before winding pirns. He went to a Catholic day school and a Protestant school for two years for a penny a week. He was too late at work to go to night school, but read the Testament to his father after he went home at night.⁶⁶

Gibson, whose father was a drunkard, would not give him anything for his schooling and put him out of the house. Young Gibson was not deterred, he went to school in the 'loan' where he lived by paying a penny a week out of a sixpence he found in the street. With a penny of this sixpence, he bought a 'spell' (Spelling book) and then when his sixpence was exhausted, his master kept him on for nothing.

With the prevalence of circumstances like these Lord Ashley's instruction and humanity suggested a broader course and on 18th February 1845, he moved for leave to introduce a bill to regulate the calico printing industry. After an uneventful passage through the Lords, it received the royal assent on 30th June 1845.⁶⁷

No child under eight was to be employed in a printworks and no child between eight and thirteen or female was to work at night. Also every child employed in a printworks was to attend school for at least 30 days between 1st January and 30th June and 30 days between 1st July and 31st December.⁶⁸ No period of daily attendance was stipulated, but at least 150 hours were to be spent in school during each six monthly period.

Parliament refused to include bleaching and dying in the act (at least until 1860 and 1861) and only when the indomitable Lord Shaftesbury in the House of Lords in 1861 moved for a fresh inquiry to be made into conditions of employment in trades not already regulated by law, did the inclusion of non-textile factories and workshops enter the provisions of factory legislation.

h) Children in Mines and Collieries

Like Scottish textile factories and workshops, overworking of children in mines was common. Non-slave labour in the 1840's was relatively recent. Prior to the Emancipation Acts of 1775 and 1799, all colliers and other persons employed in coal works were by the common law of Scotland in a state of slavery; attached to the soil and passed with the land on any change of proprietor.⁶⁹

The tradition of mining as a family affair hung on; men hewed, women and children hauled, girls being

particularly in abundance in the east of Scotland mines. Beginning at five or six years of age, they carried coal on their backs from the hewer to the pit bottom anything from 12-14 hours a day. If women did not work below and families were not employed, it was possible that children would not have gone down so soon. On the other hand, the harshness of the Scottish poor law and want of regular relief for families, orphans, or children of widows, meant the collier was able to obtain the services of a child by merely supplying him with food and clothing and regular contracts.

The chief employment of children in east Scotland (Fifeshire and Lothians) was trapping, coal bearing, putting, pumping and hewing,⁷⁰ In the west it was pushing and pulling loaded whirleys along tram roads. Hours of work could vary from eight or nine to between 15 and 18 out of every 24⁷¹ with meal times and holidays unknown.

"In the coal mines of this part of the Kingdom (East of Scotland) the idea of a holiday seems never to enter the minds of the workpeople" 72

In such an environment, education was almost extinct, sudden and violent death omnipresent;

"The hardships endured by the young people in the pits of the east of Scotland are such as to preclude the idea of any special care of them on the part of the employer." 73

Once again, Lord Ashley, fortified by the information which the Children's Employment Commission had made

available introduced a bill,⁷⁴ the main objects of which were to prohibit the employment in mines and collieries of all women and girls and boys under 13. Opposition from colliers - on grounds that if children were not employed before 10, how were colliers to bring them up and educate them when parents were too poor to pay for education - deleted valuable clauses on restricting the number of hours and days of employment. However after 1st March 1843, an act prohibited the employment underground of women and girls, and boys under 10.⁷⁵

In due course Parliament was accordingly induced to take the matter of education into consideration and a government bill was introduced on 14th February 1860.⁷⁶ The act was passed excluding children under 10 from employment, and employment between the ages of 10 and 12 was to be limited to children who were certified as being able to read and write. Monthly certificates were to be obtained by the mine owner showing that attendance at school had been made for three hours a day, two days a week, in the preceding month.⁷⁷ The reaction was similar to that attending the 1833 factory legislation - coal owners could now refuse to employ boys under 12, thus relieving themselves of the responsibility of attending to certificates.

In consequence, before 1870 the employment of boys under 12 in mines had almost entirely ceased throughout Scotland, and in very rare instances where boys under

this age were employed, it was mostly where the mother was a widow or the family large and in unusually poor circumstances.

i) Evaluation of Educational Legislation in Industry

1) Statistics

On the whole the textile industry in Scotland was the principal employer of labour at least until the 1870's although working conditions had changed. Combined with a more varied application of machinery, the number of operatives per 1,000 spindles decreased from 14 in 1829 to 4.86 in 1891,⁷⁸ thereby reducing the necessary labour time, (that element of labour time needed for its own reproduction) as a component of the working day. Similarly the sizes of establishments increased in magnitude yet not so greatly in number.⁷⁹

In fact, Scotland had fewer textile factories in 1857 than in 1850, employing principally females with fewer lads and fewer male adults. Whereas less children were employed, two were needed for the work that one performed in 1835.⁸⁰ Even with fluctuations in trade and short-time working,⁸¹ the number of persons to a factory, especially in cotton, was greater in Scotland than in England. In 1862 there were 52 persons to a woollen factory in England, 53 in Scotland, and 150 and 252 to a cotton factory respectively.⁸² The wage bill of the employer must have been less as the wages of female labour in 1850 were 40% less than in 1824.⁸³

The statistics of schools associated with factories, mines, etc., did not live up to the expectations of the founders of the legislation. Following upon the legislation for textile industries, the employer set himself the task of recruiting only from the adult population, the result being that the number of children under 13 in factories was small.⁸⁴ Barely 1,300 were employed in the whole of Scotland in 1847, rising to a mere 3,242 by 1870. Of the total children employed (5 to 15 years) this represents a rise from 1.6% to 3.7%, at a time when textile work occupied from 25 to 36% of the population under 15.⁸⁵ The conclusion to be drawn is that the half-time system was basically inoperative in Scotland. In England during the same period, the share of total employed children benefitting from factory schools rose from 7% to 11%, making half-time education a much more common part of work experience. By 1875 the share of employed children upon half-time in Scotland rose to 8% when school board regulations were operative, and the age of a 'young person' was raised from 13 to 14 years and the minimum age for employment in textiles was 10 years. A few years later in 1878 all factories and workshops had a minimum age of 10, full-time 14 years, or 13 years with an educational certificate.

Similarly in cotton bleach and dye works, the number of children employed was very small,⁸⁶ while in printworks it was greater. The number of manufacturing

establishments under the Factory Acts 1833-1867 and workshops under the Workshop Regulation Act 1867,⁸⁷ totalled 30,139 in 1871⁸⁸ and 6,984 children had their labour protected, which was barely 8% of employed Scottish children.⁸⁹

Circumstances in mining areas were not so very different. Lanarkshire was the seat of the coal and iron trade and this particular industry was very strong in local traditions. Education flourished under a system where a collier's subscription to the local school was levied as a form of taxation. In Horace Mann's educational census of 1851,⁹⁰ colliery schools and the attendant iron-works schools made up the majority of all industrial provision,⁹¹ many being set up before 1830 for philanthropic motives. The number of factory schools was small, possibly because many scholars were farmed out to local establishments. Of all the children employed these schools catered for 8%. In England's case it was only 4%. as iron works and colliery schools were not so much in evidence.

By the time the Argyll Commission reported, a change had taken place.⁹² Colliery and iron-works schools totalled 56 and 49 respectively while factory schools for half-timers showed a very poor increase. Even in Glasgow, there were only three. The employers felt no obligation to extend provision to their employees, especially when non-child labour was in abundance. When it came to rural iron and colliery

works, the employer had no such natural advantage and therefore had to be content to contribute to his own schools' upkeep.

Whereas in 1851, 8% of employed children were in some school, by 1867 the figure was approximately 12% as a result of activity in rural areas.⁹³ The urban employed, primarily because of their numbers, put themselves at a bargaining disadvantage and remained relatively educationally impoverished.

It must be remembered that proportions have been based upon the assumption that educational attendance statistics excluded attendance at schools specifically for those employed, but this may not be the case. There is no indication that decennial censuses did or did not include factory, mines and iron-works schools. Since the census attendance figures in Table 6(I) are overstatements, only the unoccupied sector is affected. Also as factory and mining schools were often part of the employer's premises, they would not be considered separate institutions and education was still an incidental to the economic fact of employment. If anything, iron and colliery schools overestimate attendance as they also catered for non-working children.

2) The Extent and Failure of the Half-Time Education System

i) Textiles

The reports on factories in Scotland by James Stuart highlighted the general conclusions of the commission on

workshops and factories which reported in 1876;⁹⁴

"They (children) are hardly employed at all in Scotland" 95

"...enactments respecting the attendance of children at school have a very limited application to Scotland and Ireland, because in the manufacturing towns of both ... there is no difficulty in procuring sufficient numbers of young persons over 13 years who are not liable to the educational provisions of the Act." 96

In Glasgow, the number of children employed in textiles between nine and thirteen years decreased from 546 to 403 between 1842 and 1844.⁹⁷ In fact, the 1844 Amendment Act attempted to improve teaching but all that could be attained was that a teacher had to be qualified to write and sign a certificate himself, instead of only putting his mark as had been frequently practised. Of the 46,071 children undergoing factory education in 1856, England had 44,769 or 1 in 13 of factory workers, Scotland 1,188 or 1 in 65, and Ireland 114 or 1 in 289.⁹⁸ If in 1871 some 25% of all employed children (5 to 15 years) were involved in textile and factory labour⁹⁹ and only 4% of the total employed children had their labour protected, then 21%-or eight out of ten factory children-remained uneducated.¹⁰⁰ At that rate of progress, factory workers could not become an educated class. Stuart did not accept such reasoning, or that instruction was little and teachers incompetent;¹⁰¹

"...a very large proportion of the children employed in factories have the advantage of being educated at better schools than had they been employed at other occupations."

A comment that said little for other schools or employment. By 1843, Stuart was still not convinced to the contrary; 102

"I am glad to be able to add that in all factories, without a single exception in Scotland, where children are employed, the factory owners have provided large and airy school rooms and well qualified teachers in which the education of the children is as well and in some instances better attended to than in ordinary parochial schools in Scotland."

Such was the case with the flax spinning and weaving factories of Messrs. Baxters and Messrs. Edwards & Company of Dundee, which employed 300 children. Few were like the factory in Greenock which made reading and writing the necessary qualification for employment.¹⁰³

What was more detrimental to factory schools was a depression in trade, usually the result of over-production or cotton famines. At first it effected short-time working and school attendance, then when trade was again brisk, employers engaged a number of poor females from the workhouse, thereby creating additional schools. It was one of those unfortunate facets of early Victorian life that education of the half-timers became a cycle dependent on economic fluctuations.

When the Argyll Commission investigated the situation it admitted that; 104

"We cannot express any opinion as to the working of the half-time system. It seems to have no existence in the rural districts of Scotland."

It found that with the half-day system, every child between 8 and 13 attending school three hours of every day. With the alternate day system, school attendance three days of the week for five hours each day was unknown;

"It is much more surprising that the half-time system proper and which alone is understood in the west of Scotland to be referred to when the subject is spoken of, is almost wholly ignored in Glasgow." 105

There was only one establishment, a large cotton spinning and thread manufacturer in Bridgeton, in which it had been persistently carried out for a long period and received a fair trial. Even here it was an inferior school and the way the foreman operated, children regarded attendance as a punishment rather than a privilege.¹⁰⁶ To avoid punishment many children left for other employments where restrictions on labour did not exist.

The solitary plea on its behalf considered by the commissioners and one that would have been extinct were there a national system of education was that;¹⁰⁷

"...parents, who would otherwise neglect their children are induced to send them to school."

The law demanded that so much time be dedicated to education but it bestowed no consideration and furnished no provision to ensure its efficiency. Furthermore, the children could sleep or idle or run riot in school, it was only enough that they attended for the statutory number of hours. Teachers were more often than not

poorly paid, depending heavily on the fees of irregular attenders. At times an inspector of factories might declare that he was not a school inspector so most of the schools attended by the children were not certified or under any educational supervision. The inspectors could not be expected to step aside from their duties to exercise a totally separate and entirely incongruous prerogative.

There was one ray of light in the gloom, in central England the half-time system was indigenous, and swarms of half-timers went from mill to school. Where English cotton manufacture was the staple industry, it became ingrained into the consciousness of the population.

ii) Printworks

In terms of numbers recruited, the Printworks Act of 1845 was a failure: only 404 in 1867 were on half-time.¹⁰⁸ Numbers fell by three quarters in the five years 1846-51;

"In all occupations except the textile manufacturers under the Acts of 1833 and 1844, there is no half-time system for comparatively no children are employed at all. It is a state of things which the legislative did not intend." 109

In 1847, the number of printworks in Scotland numbered 80, situated chiefly in the Glasgow area, and employing between 4,000 and 5,000 children.¹¹⁰ All children were subject to the Printfields' Regulation Act¹¹¹ and it was discovered that the most serious difficulties encountered in carrying into effect the

enactments, were the sections 23 to 25 respecting the attendance at school of children from 8-13 years. These enactments required that previous to employment in a printworks, the parent or person having benefit from the wages of a child had to send the child to school for at least 30 days in a half year. Such attendances were to comprise not less than 150 hours during each half year and no attendance should be above five hours on any one day. As soon as the child was employed, the parent had to notify the occupier of the printwork of the school which the child was to attend, and provide a certificate book that was given to a master at the school. The master was obliged to keep a register of the name and attendance of the child. The printwork occupier then had to obtain from the school-master a certificate of the child's attendance for the stated period; and a like certificate at the beginning of each following period of six months.

Under the Factory Acts the employer had to pay for the education of the child by deducting the amount from the child's wages; under the Printfields Act, he only had the right to call for the master's certificates, a distinction in the latter case which proved to be a fruitful source of fraud and evasion.

The expense of the certificate book and register, and of the child's attendance at school for the first half year had to be defrayed before his admission to

the works, so it was some time before the child was entitled to any wages. For the poor parent or the orphan this was unthinkable. Also a schoolmaster had to be found willing to keep the child. Even in this event the employer could not employ the child for seven months, until his 30 days were completed.

Because of the disastrous nature of these requirements, in 1847 Sections 23, 24 and 25 of the original act were repealed and a new form of school certificate devised, providing a child with employment if he had attended not less than 150 hours preceding the day on which he began work.¹¹² The outcome was inevitable, fewer were recruited than before.¹¹³

Still, in some establishments the children attended school whenever their services were not required by reason of slackness, or at times made available by the exigencies of the work in the establishment. Obviously, when the school attendance was in any degree frequent or regular or both, it resulted simply from the wish of the employer and not from any legal requirement. Many Scottish employers enforced school attendance on Saturday, allowing work to finish early, thereby reducing the leisure time of working children. In a few cases, where children left work for a period, their places were filled up. During the interval that ensued they forgot what they had learned six months before and instead of going to school worked elsewhere.

The uncertainty of employment, particularly in block printing, and the frequent shifting of children to other printworks, increased the irregularity of school attendance while make modification of the act or assimilating it to the Factory Acts all the more difficult. In Glasgow it was easy to procure certificates without being at school and in this respect the factory inspectors were wise to fraud and evasion;¹¹⁴

"...as regards the great majority of these children this nominal school attendance has been found in practice not only a farce but a mischievous delusiin for it is a semblance of education without any reality."

Requiring employees to have certificates of school attendance did not require them to have learned anything, and a visit to the printworks school run by Mrs. Ann Killin of Bridgeton, brought to light the fact that she could not spell her name; while Mr. William Logue of Landressey Street, Calton, had his certificates annulled, for in his apartment of 15 feet by 10 feet "...75 children screamed something unintelligible at the top of their voices"¹¹⁵ In Clydebank printworks, children 13 years of age "...cannot read words of more than one syllable and some, especially the Irish cannot read at all."¹¹⁶

Against intransigence of employers legislation seemed to be powerless in breaking the cycle of transmitted deprivation.

3) The Effects of Factory Legislation on Educational Thinking and Policy

After some twenty years of operation the advantages of factory legislation were still in doubt. Inspector Kincaid picking factory operatives at random found that only a few could read and write,¹¹⁷ while manufacturers concurred in their own guilt in stating that in their educational aspects, the Factory Acts had failed. In spite of the muddle feelings about education were changing.

Controversy centred on the belief that employment and education were conflicting interests. George Anderson in the Transactions of 1860 analysed the failings of the half-time system and concluded;¹¹⁸

"...if we wish to make them (factory workers) so (educated) we must look to some other machinery than the Factory Act."

In place of separate legislative measures for each industry, with unfair restrictions and exemptions, he recommended that up to some stated age, for the sake of health and education, children's labour should not be marketable. Further, at a stated age on passing a given educational test, they should be open for employment not exceeding 10 hours daily. At some more advanced stated age, they could be free to work the same hours irrespective of the test. The rationale was that parents could realise the benefit of a child's wages only after doing their duty towards the child's

education. What he was advocating was an educational test and its efficiency at the time was suspect.

The following difficulty also arose. The 1862 Revised Code meant that half-timers were competing with children who had gained twice as much education without the burden of manual work. Half-timers in a class kept back the rest of the children, so that they were the chief hindrance to the extension of the curriculum of the upper classes of the primary school. An outcry against the system focussed on the difficulty of the half-timers at school, and the increased complexity of machine design made the co-operation of millowners with abolition easy.

When an education conference was convened in London in June 1857, under the auspices of the Prince Consort, with the object of securing more education for the working classes, these questions were in the minds of the delegates. Already there was some dissension in the ranks of the factory inspectorate. Robert Baker believed the half-time system afforded the only solution to the most difficult of all operations - compulsory education of the people, without seeming to compel and without offering offence to any religious or sectarian prejudices. While accepting it with congregated labour in factories, he doubted whether it was possible with diffused labour in mines and agriculture, where hours of labour varied.¹¹⁹ Kincaid on the other hand was infatuated with an educational test. His remedy for the evils was to give the parent a direct interest in

the education of the child, by entitling an educated child to factory employment a given number of years sooner than one not so qualified. The plan could be applied to all employments provided the expense of education was merely nominal.¹²⁰

The general defect attached to all school attendance in Alexander Redgrave's view was that it was not sufficiently prolonged. If it had been, then it would have had important advantages.¹²¹ In his own district, whole day scholars attended the same school as factory children but for a longer period, consequently the extent of their education was greater. Redgrave claimed that the system was not compulsory, only conditional;¹²²

"...the system which appears in many respects to be better adapted as a general educational scheme than the factory half-time system is not compulsory, it has even less of compulsion; it is that previously acquired instruction should be necessary to enable a child to earn wages."

He wanted adaptations without the taint of compulsion, education as an antecedent to employment, rather than combined with labour, and cited systematic evasion of compulsion in Prussia as evidence.¹²³ Where wages could not be earned until the child had been to school the acquisition of knowledge would doubtlessly have a certain money value.

To these proposals, Ackroyd, the Member of Parliament for Huddersfield, and a well known factory owner, added a new condition which Redgrave favoured -

no child between 13 and 15 years was to be employed full time unless it could produce a certificate that it had received the elements of rudimentary instruction.¹²⁴ The whole scheme would annul the complaints of schoolmasters that factory children were backward on their entrance into school, at the same time as prolonging education generally. At least now employers could give preference to children who had been the longest time in school.

The inspectorate was not alone in advocating the educational test. One reliable source, the North British Daily Mail, whose editor was Robert Somers the census taker of education in Glasgow, declared in an editorial of June 4th, 1857, that the new scheme would take the onus of responsibility from the employer and plant it on the shoulders of the parent, thus adding self-interest to moral obligation.¹²⁵

Fortunately, the Argyll Commissioners had the last word on the issue. Apparently, Kincaid's remedies were satisfactory only to the manufacturing interests who could see an escape route through evening schools that did not overtly interfere with production. The images of Glasgow were impressed deeply on the minds of commissioners Greig and Harvey; "...such tests will fail to secure sufficient instruction whatsoever be their form or application,"¹²⁶ especially in the large works where children were employed without reference to

age. Already in a town like Glasgow these works neutralised the benefits, such as they were, of the Factory Act provisions.

With particular reference to the Printworks Act in Calton and Bridgeton, Greig and Harvey found the requirements widely and systematically evaded with individuals driving a trade in issuing false or forged certificates for sixpence. Lodgers granted certificates to please their landladies in favour of the children of the latter, workmen to get particular children into work, and even mill girls to assist a juvenile. Books containing certificates with printed instructions for filling them up were sold by book-sellers in the districts;

"... the matter being the subject of frequent conversation, all the employers, however ignorant on other topics, are familiar with the routine to be observed."¹²⁷

In another sense the education test was not novel. At the paper mills at Penicuik, Midlothian, an attempt had been made to enforce an educational test before children were admitted to the mills. It had failed lamentably and so many were rejected that the mill was in danger of coming to a standstill.¹²⁸ Similar experiments at Kilbirnie, Ayrshire, stimulated education in the village but the parents showed their appreciation by sending children to an inefficient adventure school.

Since 1860, in the coal mining districts, the test was not optional but compulsory. When the Mines

Inspection Act was passed, it required that children under 12 years of age should produce certificates of school attendance. At a pit in Annbank Colliery in Ayrshire, 46% of the young people could neither read nor write, and 8% could read a little but could not write a letter,¹²⁹ exhibiting a poor record of success and a long history of casualties.

One note of dissent came from no less a man than Leonard Horner. His view was prefaced in the Glasgow report.¹³⁰ It occurred to him that if a child of 11 years of age was to work full time not only would his future education be hopeless but he could lose even the power to read, a power that needed continual exercise to be effective. David Brook, nine months a scrap piler announced;¹³¹

"I was two years at school before I went to work. I could read a little before I left school, I can't read well now"

That the acts were ineffective was obvious, but the legislation alone was to blame by providing education but giving no enactment by which the professed end was to be secured. Not a word was said of the lowest possible qualification needed to teach. What is more, the inspectors were powerless to remove scholars from an inefficient school. Horner was right to blame the legislation and condemn the test as no answer, for Kincaid's proposals would have brought the age of childhood down, adulthood beginning at 11.

Reinforced by Horner's pronouncements and with a touch of insight, Greig and Harvey summed up the predicament of all those who clamoured for education reform;¹³²

"The only effectual remedy, however, must be a national system of education, which shall reach in its provisions the entire community. We should not then have to struggle against the combined ignorance and cupidity of parents; for until we can secure a succession of educated parent, the children will never be sent regularly to school, if their labours can be turned to profitable account."

Even the Association of Certified Schoolmasters of Scotland was forced to declare;¹³³

"...it (the educational test) might have a beneficial effect but compulsory education would alone accomplish the object."

The commissioners' footnote waxed poetic; ¹³⁴

"The law is called upon frequently to punish in children the criminal neglect of parents, let us now invert the order by punishing parents so far as coercion is punishment for this neglect. Both society and the rising generation will have reason to welcome the change."

Not surprisingly, the existence of good schools, the co-operation of the parents, and the superseding of the Factory Acts as a general educational scheme was the task of the 1872 Education (Scotland) Act.

4) Progress and Experience in Mines, Iron Works and Agriculture

Collieries and iron works being localised provided a unique set of circumstances for working class education. Statistically, schools located in the vicinity of such works added greatly to the total percentage of employed

children in Scotland, and more than compensated for the failure of half-time schooling.¹³⁵ It will become obvious later that mining and iron works schools in addition catered for children of workers who were not later to be employed in the mining or iron industry, unlike factory schools that were established for working children alone.

The rapid expansion of the mining population in the Lanarkshire parishes of Monkland and Bothwell was alarming, increasing from 17,506 in 1821 to 65,817 in 1860.¹³⁶ Many immigrant Irish were employed here. The number of specially provided work schools obviously flourished.¹³⁷ According to the 1851 census there were only 20 in the whole of Scotland (Appendix Table 6(IX)) In 1867 there were 23 in Lanarkshire alone (Appendix Table 6(X)). The inflated numbers lend strength to the argument that a considerable proportion were short-lived.

Those that survived were superior to the parish schools in respect of the buildings, accommodation and average yearly income. What was in their favour was the method commonly practised in mining stations of securing and collecting school pence. From the workmen's wages a small sum of twopence or fourpence was deducted, varying according to the number of children at school, to meet the cost of education;

"... for this large section of the population the means of elementary education at work-day schools have been so well provided as to¹³⁸ leave very little more to be desired."

These advantages were counteracted by short attendance, especially after the age of 10 when only 10% of the miner's children took advantage of them;

"Sometimes the children are known to appear at five or six different schools in the course of as many months"¹³⁹

The Lanarkshire lead mining community at Leadhills was unusual in many respects but not entirely untypical.

The village of Leadhills or Hopeton, comprising a population of 1,000 stood at the top of the pass of Glengonner, at an elevation of 1,400 feet "...in a shelterless vale surrounded by summits of black heath"¹⁴⁰

Due to the rundown of mines in 1842, they employed only 188 hands - 152 adults, 18 above 13 years and under 18, and 18 under 13. The male children were almost exclusively employed in 'dressing' or washing ores in the open air, while women and girls from eight years upwards embroidered muslins for agents of Glasgow houses. Surprisingly, the education was uncommonly good. The miners' moral character was;

"... decidedly superior to that of manufacturing and mining labourers generally, employed together at large public works"¹⁴¹

"...the children of the poor labourers of Leadhills are under as good or perhaps under a better system of intellectual culture than even the middle class children of South Britain generally."¹⁴²

Often better educated miners kept their sons on at school until 14 or 15 years of age to fit them for a junior situation as a clerk in Glasgow or Edinburgh, or as a shop boy.

A similar set of social circumstances, though not of a geographically isolated nature occurred at the Govan collieries owned by Mr. Dixon. There a school was opened in 1826 and everyone occupying a house belonging to the colliery was obliged to pay to the school a fixed part of their wages, ninepence per month for each child from 6-12 years. Attached to the school was a reading room and brass band. It appears that around Gartsherrie, Gatehead, Kilmarnock and other well known collieries, a system of mutual self-instruction was well ingrained into the population, supplemented by a sprouting of colliery schools opened up under the employers' supervision. Even fees were waived for poor boys at Dalkeith colliery so that a boy was able to read and write before entering employment. ¹⁴³

Comparable educational conditions existed in the iron works. Iron works had been given a considerable lease of life after the discovery of the hot blast furnace by Neilson in Glasgow about 1828, as a result of which accumulations of relatively untutored workers came to Lanarkshire to seek work. By 1867 their schools served a population larger than collieries and

factories put together.¹⁴⁴

The large concerns like the Monkland Iron Company, Shotts & Dundyvan Works, and Clyde and Govan Iron Works, had a fairly sophisticated system of school maintenance based upon the colliery principle of worker contribution, so that from 1860 to 1865 the average number of scholars at Shotts Iron Works day school was 588, and 167 at evening school making a total of 755 attendances. In six years £2,126. 6s. 4d. was paid to teachers by way of fees with £2,231 4s. 10d. retained from workmen's wages for education.¹⁴⁵ The ten schools of Messrs. Merry & Cunningham in Ayrshire, Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire and Dumbartonshire were attended by 1,515, with a total income from stoppages and fees of £1,202 5s. 7d.¹⁴⁶ The extent of the employers' obligation is clearer when we look at the annual deficiency of expenditure over income of £458 14s. 11d.

Seymour Tremenheer, the commissioner appointed under the provisions of the act¹⁴⁷ prohibiting employment underground of women and girls, saw the usefulness of education;¹⁴⁸

"... there is no better investment than that which tends to provide for the capitalist a moral and reasonable set of labourers."

He was worried about the lawlessness, unreliability and general republican and socialist inclination of the miner, so he consistently made overtures for better policing of mining districts to overcome insubordination and bad habits.¹⁴⁹ One has the suspicion that schools were

encouraged by Tremenheer as 'schools of enlightenment' with the added inducement of iron and coal masters' prizes. Weight was given to this belief when a great many collieries objected to a fixed payment for education on the grounds that if they had no children they still had to pay. It appears that compulsory rates would have been acceptable as long as there was an equal share in the appointment of schoolmasters and generally greater democratic control.¹⁵⁰ Alexander McDonald, secretary of the Miners' Association of Scotland estimated in evidence before the Select Committee on Mines¹⁵¹ that the owners made a profit out of the transaction over an eight year period to the tune of twelve times the cost of erecting a school, plus the building grant from the Privy Council on top. It was actions like this on the part of the employers that bred a contempt for education among employees.

During the 1850's innovations like industrial schools for cookery were added to many enterprises and the Mining School in the Andersonian University Glasgow, was established principally to prevent accidents among overseers. For the working children, the extension of the factory and printfields acts to collieries was mooted, but legislation received a cool reception until the Mining Act of 1860. By law, employers were then compelled to demand certificates from children between 10 and 12 years, or school attendance for three hours a

day, two days per week. The consequences were inevitable;

"Coal Masters generally do not incline to employ boys under 12 years of age. They then avoid the trouble of keeping certificates." 152

Gradually, the same feelings about compulsory education and reform affected the inspectors of coal fields ¹⁵³ as it had the school inspectors, but not until the last quarter of the nineteenth century were inconsistencies ironed out, and the minimum employable age had sufficiently been raised to exclude all but a handful of children from the drudgery of mining labour.

Agriculture on the other hand as a species of employment was to suffer a severe decline after the mid century from which it never entirely recovered. ¹⁵⁴ Rural populations moving towards the towns left behind them conditions more intolerable than those they had to bear in the slums of the big city.

For well over a century the parish school had come to represent all that was beneficial in rural education, now even they were outflanked by irreversable changes in rural society. Mr. Sellar and Colonel Maxwell ¹⁵⁵ in their reports of rural districts discovered a patchwork of education, inconsistent because of geography and the seasonal demands of an agricultural economy.

Luckily Scotland was not beset like England with the familiar agricultural gang into which children were

enticed at an early age to roam the country in search of work. A commission in the 1860's had been set up to investigate the worst aspects of this practice and in 1867 an Agricultural Gangs Act was passed having jurisdiction over England alone. Their fourth report¹⁵⁶ investigated Scotland, with the deliberate intention of finding out whether matters of detail embodied in factory legislation could be applied to agriculture. It acted as a prelude to compulsory attendance, and in so doing contributed to the by no means inconsiderable feeling surrounding the act of 1872.

The effect of summer work on children's progress at school was too obvious to ignore. As there were few infant schools, education generally started at about six years of age. Between December and March when rural labour hibernated, attendance at school was good. Spring work followed the annual examinations by the presbytery. After the inspection school numbers diminished and the fields were occupied with children potato planting, bark peeling, turnip hoeing and cow herding. When the season ended children would again drop in to their school. Only the poorest class of children were subjected in this way, which for the highlands meant everyone. The greatest compensatory factor was the strong feeling among all classes of the rural population towards education. Nothing comparable

existed in England where farmers were opposed to it or landowners were indifferent. 157

This feeling in Scotland probably arose from statutory provision, and from the eighteenth century experiments under the guidance of the S.S.P.C.K. and the Commission for Managing the Forfeited Estates. 158 Although confined specifically to the highlands, it encouraged through the local schools an interest in the arts of agriculture, local crafts and spinning. More noticeably after the Forty Five the S.S.P.C.K. used techniques of this sort for the pacification of the rural districts.

Outside of formal methods, a reputation for self-education reminiscent of the hedge schools of Ireland 159 became a current practise among the rural Scots. Wild districts of Lanarkshire at Leadhills nurtured pockets of resistance;

"... through the agency of boys hired from it to teach in the farmers families." 160

Yet in the long run, subscription libraries, individual efforts, or heroic acts of self-denial could not resist a relative absence of benefits that townspeople possessed. Rural people laboured under a pre-mechanistic notion of time as more a function of season than clock time, with school well integrated to suit the farmers needs. Only on the industrial village was bestowed the advantages of government regulation.

j) The 1860's Children's Employment Commission
and The Non-Regulated Trades

The only other sector of child employment not dealt with so far, took place in the non-regulated trades. This portion of working children constituted 14% of those employed and was badly documented. In educational terms, it did not have an impact on educational thinking like the factories or mines that continually came under the watchful eye of government commissions. But so many Scottish working class children were employed in an unregulated fashion that it cannot be left without comment.

Not all those at school were unemployed. A return ordered in 1898 by the House of Commons for England and Wales, giving the number of children attending elementary schools known to be working for wages, amounted to 144,026 of those on the books.¹⁶¹ This, in itself, was an underestimate. Children were likely to be employed unpaid by parents so that they do not appear in our statistics. Even when homes fell within the definition of 'domestic factory' or 'domestic workshop' they escaped to a great extent the notice of a factory inspector. In numerous cases where a handicraft was carried on at home, it was altogether outside the operation of the Factory Acts, either because the work was done at irregular intervals or because it belonged to certain classes of light work which were wholly exempt. The occupied, unoccupied and school attending

population becomes blurred in this respect. In the lifetime of various working class groups a child or young person could be employed by his/her parents one week, work for wages the next week, while attending school intermittently.

The practice of wage earning told more against girls' attendance at school than boys. Girls were wanted for baby minding, house cleaning and errands, whereas boys would fetch, hawk, carry milk, deliver newspapers or clean steps. Where shops proliferated, barbering or working for a grocer was common. Most jobs did not involve learning a skill or trade, but were purely unskilled labour. Of all occupations, shopwork was likely to take over ¹⁶²one half of those who combined education with labour, with only local byelaws and the Shop Hours Act to regulate it. Although street trading or the costermongering of Mayhew folklore occupied but a very small section of the employed children, they were favourite occupations taken up by the 'unoccupied' who aided their parents, and so do not appear in census statistics.

The Children's Employment Commission conducted in the 1860's and empowered to investigate employment in 'trades and manufacturers not already regulated by law', added little to what was already known by the mid 1840's. Whereas legislation usually applied to establishments employing steam power, most of the lace weaving or

apparel manufacture was carried on by the unassisted manual labour of young girls, often in rooms of private houses. These constituted what came to be called 'sweated trades'. 'Needlework' included dressmakers, milliners, seamstresses, shirtmakers, tailors and hatters of which Scotland had 33,066 in 1861.¹⁶³ So called 'scholars' were taken to private houses to learn the trade for a year. In Glasgow, 8,000 young girls under 20 were employed in millinery and dressmaking in 249 private houses employing 12-40 people. The taking-in of 'scholars' in this way was a form of apprenticeship. Some private dressmakers would have all scholars and no paid hands, so children employed as weavers and winders got no education whatsoever.

Tobacco manufacture, a feature of the poorest areas of Glasgow and Edinburgh was the employment reserved for some 1,200 boys. Tobacco boys and street ragamuffins were synonymous and being largely neglected children they were the lowest of the low, and frequently fell into crime. 'Tobacco Boys' Schools' had been opened in each city. That in Edinburgh was instituted in 1820 and remodelled in 1852. It was supported entirely by subscriptions from tobacco importers, makers and manufacturers, at fees of $\frac{1}{2}$ d per week. The Glasgow school in the Old Wynd was established in 1862, attended by 300 boys paying one penny per week, for two hours in the evening. Like schools in glass and bottle works,

brisk trade and late hours unavoidably encroached upon school time and frequently additional schools set up by workmen would close within months due to lack of enthusiasm.

Friends of tobacco boys, the climbing boys or chimney sweeps had long been the subject of unsuccessful attempts to restrict labour. Back in the eighteenth century, Jonas Hanway had tried to get legislation for their protection securing minimum rates of pay and regulations of chimney sizes. A bill for better conditions for climbing boys was introduced in 1788 but the provisions were a dead letter from the outset. The practice of sending small children up vents had only ceased in 1840 when Shaftesbury was successful in getting a bill through Parliament prohibiting the employment of any person under 21. In Scotland preventative measures enforced by the municipal authorities of Glasgow and Edinburgh under the Burgh Police Acts 1843 and 1849 had suppressed the practice except by licence. By 1875 the Glasgow system applied to the whole country under a chimney sweeps' act of that year.

With regard to the non-regulated trades in the last decades of the nineteenth century, so small a proportion of Scottish children were totally without education that responsibility for their protection was left to the education acts and local bye-laws.

k) Evening Schools - A Solution?

A possible solution to the combination of mental and manual labour, and the early withdrawal of children from school for jobs in industry, presented itself in the form of the evening or continuation school. Essentially two types had been in operation at least from the beginning of the century. There was the school for adults of 18 years and above and the school for the young after work. The adult school provided an overlap between industry and adult education, in consequence it presented the possibility of a second chance in education.

What was noticeable was the absence of any general systematic method of conducting the establishments. If they were lucky enough to get grants, the principle upon which grants were given to schools was that the same pupils were in attendance in the evening as during the day. Some were conducted by teachers to augment their meagre salaries, others by members of public works and those who felt that the prevailing ignorance materially clogged the missionary effort of the parish. Such was their diffusion that statistics of evening schools show little or no consistency.

Evening schools for children were not included in the 1851 census,¹⁶⁴ but those for adults in Scotland were well documented.¹⁶⁵ At the 438 operating in mid century, 15,000 scholars attended, predominantly male, paying between threepence and fourpence in fees, two hours per evening, for stated months of the years. Not

surprising, Lanarkshire had one third of all schools.

The three R's formed the staple diet with artisans, factory apprentices and domestic servants the best attenders.¹⁶⁶ The Argyll Commissioners' statistics were more thorough. Outside of Glasgow, only 18 factories or public works had such a school worthy of inclusion in the statistics while 25 private adventure schools had evening extensions.¹⁶⁷ Within Glasgow the situation was more promising: here 85 schools catered for 5,363 scholars.¹⁶⁸ C.F. Maxwell and A.C. Sellar discovered 10 schools for 1,568 scholars in the lowland country districts,¹⁶⁹ and 15 schools for 500 in the remaining country districts.¹⁷⁰

How far the evening schools for children could be looked upon as a substitute for day schools or as a method of lengthening the period of school time, is very difficult to answer. In a great majority of cases it was impossible to define the routine with any accuracy. At the new year, schools collapsed to reassemble in February sadly shorn of their proportions and under decay. Having little supervision, attendance was irregular and fitful, but without these schools many would have been denied education altogether. Another unintended result occurred where parents and children were tempted to neglect early training in the belief, or on the pretext, that the want could be supplied later in life at evening schools ... "Oh but we're going to put them to the night schule." ¹⁷¹

Not all were like the schools set up by Dr. MacLeod of the Barony in Port Dundas and Townhead in 1860. ¹⁷² Here the pupils, all over 18, paying fees of 3/- per quarter, had a respectable education. Most were like the evening school in Blackfriars where in winter, 130 pupils 14 to 30 years consisting of labourers, police apprentices, and fathers, commenced with their multiplication tables, ¹⁷³ or the rural schools that could not acquire a competent teacher because of the scattered population. In fact an evening school was a maximum inducement to send children to school early to learn the art of reading without understanding, and later to salve the conscience of masters and parents alike.

The greatest hindrance to attendance in one of the numerous public works schools was overwork and fatigue.

"To tell the truth Sir, when he has been working here till six o'clock at night, the school's out o' his head - a heap o' it; he's more ready for his bed." ¹⁷⁴

This was forgotten by the employers who saw the general lack of interference with the normal hours of labour as a boon.

John Hay, a school teacher of Glasgow summed up their significance for the Factory Commission of 1833; ¹⁷⁵

"... a child will learn as much in three months if taught in the day as it will in nine months of evening school."

While the Master of Dundoon Works School, Coatbridge considered the night school a failure, ¹⁷⁶ "... so far as regards children who have had no previous education."

1) The Decline of Factory Education after 1872

Dundee, seat of jute manufacture after 1860, was the last of the Scottish cities to maintain the half-time system.¹⁷⁷ In 1871 the number of half-timers in the whole of Scotland was approximately 3,188, and 48% were in Dundee. The Glasgow School Board at its inception reported that only 840 children were avowedly so employed in Glasgow where jute was less in evidence.¹⁷⁸

Jute from Bengal became established in 1840 and ousted hemp as a bagging material and flax as a packing fabric. Demand for it increased rapidly during the Crimean war and many girls were taken on as half-timers earning between 3/6d to 4/- per week.¹⁷⁹ Usually the foreman or gaffer engaged the half-timer as a doffer, bobbin boy, dipper, filler, shifter or in-giver.

In Dundee, there was little opposition to the system by the employers who saw themselves fulfilling a social need and therefore they accepted the system as a custom. The Dundee School Board, with its own problems of maintaining statutory requirements of schooling in the face of a rapidly expanding population, welcomed the action of employers in providing half-time works schools. What is more, from an economic point of view it made little burden on the rates.

When in the 1880's the Dundee half-time system was at its peak, around 5,000 children came into this category.¹⁸⁰ The Dens Works and the factories of Messrs. Baxter Bros., were the largest employers. Gradually,

the use of half-timers became less attractive with the constant raising of the minimum employment age, and the rise of the Calcutta industry and its low cost labour increased competition, depressed wages, and sapped the strength of the movement. The old practices however, dragged on until the education act of 1918 legally terminated them.

Whatever the reason for the half-timer's disappearance, it certainly was not due to any direct process of law. Because children were concentrated in the textile trades, a decline in these trades was bound to lead to a decline in half-timers altogether. The system had always been associated with the practice of employing child labour in low wage industries. As the minimum age at which children could be employed in factory work was raised from time to time - eight years in 1844, 12 years in 1901 - the basis of half-time was undermined. After 1896 no half-timers were recorded in Glasgow at all.¹⁸¹ It seems that Glasgow's heavy industry and Lancashire's cotton trade sealed its fate.

The inception of school boards and local bye-laws towards the end of the century complicated the issue of child labour and factory regulation to an unforeseen degree. Two acts were passed in 1867, the Factory Acts Extension Act and the Workshops Regulation Act, making half-time attendance compulsory for a number of trades known to be unsupervised. Whereas earlier Factory Acts

were applicable only to certain localities, employers under the Workshops Acts existed everywhere.

Previously in purely non-factory districts i.e. mixed districts, the schoolmaster did not address himself to the care of the employed child's special interests; now he was obliged to pay attention to their welfare.

The Factory Act of 1874 incorporated the certificate of proficiency in the three R's first embodied in the Mines Act of 1860. It stated that a person of 13 years and under 14 would not be deemed a 'young person' unless he had obtained a certificate showing a prescribed standard of proficiency in the three R's.¹⁸² By legalising the alternate-day system, it came in line with arrangements of meal hours and school hours in Scotland. Uncharacteristically, it forced manufacturers to employ more half-timers and thus independently of the Scottish elementary education act, had the effect of increasing considerably the attendance at school of children whose services otherwise would not have been in demand, and who would in all probability have failed to attend school at all.¹⁸³

By degrees various pieces of legislation in the 1870's aligned education with the demands of the economy and current opinion on compulsory attendance. It enhanced the motive for raising the minimum age for employment in factories and elsewhere by establishing a statutory minimum employment age and exemption from

full-time school attendance, at the same time as it gave to local authorities a bye-law power. The Scottish education act of 1872 made full-time attendance from 5 to 13 the responsibility of employers and parents, and a child had to secure an education certificate before he or she could be employed. Later on in the Scottish act of 1901, the minimum age for employment was raised to 12 years and local authorities could unconditionally prohibit full-time employment before 14 years. An amendment to the Factory Act achieved the same end as regards employment in factories and workshops.

Changes were in operation in England not unlike those in Scotland. The English Act of 1870 empowered school boards to pass bye-laws regulating school attendance and thereby over-rode the right of employers under the Factory Act to engage additional children of 12 to 14 years for half-time employment without the consent of local education authorities. The amending act (Lord Sandon's) of 1876, forbade the employment of children in England under 10 years, thus fixing the minimum age at which children would become wage earners. This act introduced 'attendance orders' enabling school boards to take parents to court. In addition, there was no employment between 10 and 14 unless proficiency in the three R's was gained at a certified efficient school. Another workshop act of 1878 limited full time employment in England to children over 14, except

for those gaining exemption at 13. A partial exemption or half-time certificate was granted if children of 10 to 13 years passed a special labour examination, the standard of which could be fixed by the bye-laws.

The success of the education acts as a means of establishing a higher minimum age for employment than that established by industrial legislation, must be qualified by two considerations. The first centres on the power of the education acts or of bye-laws made under it, or administrative action, to prevent children from being employed under the Factory Acts, where the Factory Acts taken by themselves would allow them to work. The Scottish act of 1878 specifically withheld from local authorities the right to prevent children from being employed under the Factory Acts in accordance with their provision.¹⁸⁴ Much was left to the discretion of the school boards. Daniel Walker, Assistant Factory Inspector, complained in 1874 that many boards were threatening to exclude half-timers from school on the grounds of dearth of school accommodation. ¹⁸⁵

Secondly, the acts did not prevent children attending schools from being employed out of school hours. It was not therefore, possible to enforce the minimum age of 10 years recognised in English and Scottish schools in 1876 and 1878. In fact, the Education (Scotland) Act 1878 recognised out of school employment and attempted to restrict it by limiting the hours within which it could take place.

Prohibition of the employment of children under 10 was nullified by the drafting of the act, and restrictions with regard to hours of labour were not effectively enforced by the boards. It was these anomalies and loopholes in the law that fostered the illicit employment of children in various occupations, particularly shops, even after the passing of the 1872 act. A glance back to the graph of Appendix Table 6(I) illustrates just how buoyant child employment was towards the eclipse of Victoria's reign.

An Act of 1883 tried to tighten up attendance, bringing Factory and education acts alike into harmony. It raised the leaving age from 13 to 14 and allowed exemption only on grounds of efficiency - Standard V. Stated simply, it brought into alignment the age up to which a child could be compelled to go to school and that up to which he could be prevented from going into full time employment. If he had passed Standard III, he became a half-timer, provided he continued his education as prescribed by the Education Department. In effect, it made half-time and full-time exemption dependent upon the attainment of a set standard of proficiency - Standards III and IV - while in England, the standard gained for a half-time labour certificate was set by local bye-laws and attendance certificates were accepted as full-time exemption qualifications.

With statutory provisions for free education

sanctioned by a Local Government Act of 1889 and Local Taxation Act 1890, a particular handicap under which a half-time scholar had suffered was removed. But the 1901 Education (Scotland) Act reduced the number of half-timers by raising the minimum age of employment to 12 and by giving the Education Department provision to withhold grants from school boards that granted too many exemption certificates.

Up until now the trade union movement had been against the half-time system although the textile unions had a blind spot when it came to child labour.¹⁸⁶ Parents on the whole wanted the system to continue and the opposition of the textile operatives probably accounts for the system surviving in Dundee until this time. Fortunately, Scotland waved goodbye to the half-time scholar in 1918 when no child was to be employed before 8.00 am or after 6.00 pm and no child under 15 could work in factory, mine or quarry.

m) Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation

The idea of a day school becoming appurtenant to mills and works was first tested with success at Robert Owen's New Lanark Mills in Scotland. In his community of 2,300 people, children were taken in to the mill first at 10 years and until they were 12 worked for $12\frac{1}{2}$ hours a day inclusive of one and a quarter for meals and the time set aside for instruction.¹⁸⁷

Within the community there was a preparatory school into which all the children from three to six years were admitted at the option of the parents. A second school admitted children from six to ten years. Because the education combined music, dance, and basic literacy, Owen's plan for combining mental and manual labour was at the time unique, as it had overcome the basic defect of the 1802 act - systematic evasion by employing children rather than apprenticing them. Not until the half-time system became effective in the 1840's was any system of indirect compulsion devised elsewhere.

Owen's scheme was regarded at its initiation as a great achievement and even won the admiration of Marx, as the only method of producing fully developed human beings.¹⁸⁸ Unfortunately, its success was both hindered and enhanced by circumstance. It produced results considerable in themselves and more striking when compared with the unsatisfactory results of education as carried on under a system from which the element of compulsory attendance was entirely absent. More important structural changes in all industries were called for but they took a long time in coming.

Education became highly successful in breaking the cycle of transmitted deprivation, where hours were reduced, and all legislation in the nineteenth century was bent upon restricting the conditions under which

legally employed children could work, by establishing minimum standards of age and educational attainment. It was a great step towards superseding the Sunday Schools as the institute upon which the working classes and the under stratum of masters depended for all the knowledge they ever attempted to obtain. Sunday Schools filled a void for which the 'march of the intellect' had provided no substitute. The Factory Acts indicated that henceforth, labour and mind were to act in concert and the necessity for proper schools soon became apparent. In consequence of delay, the area of adventure schools enlarged under the pressure of compulsory education, and although they literally complied with the enactments of the law they were grossly inadequate.

As far as employers were concerned, they were happy to press education into the evening school or the rest period to avoid interfering with output and production. Ignorant parents satisfied only with exploiting the labour of their offspring and skiving from employers, forced education into the leisure time of workers, thereby increasing the length of the working day. On top of which males during the winter seasons were often required to work longer than the prescribed hours. What was most threatening was the fact that the whole lifetime of the proletariat was becoming labour time and education could only increase this process unless hours of labour were reduced.

Initially the half-time system provided a valuable solution to the overlabouring of the young in factories. What eventually took away the opportunity of instruction for them, was the gradual decrease in the number of factories and printworks legally obliged to enforce the law. Employers could simply substitute unregulated for regulated labour as had happened in Scotland. Besides which, the acts were made to suit English habits, as Scottish dinner hours were from 2.00 to 3.00 pm while schools opened from 10.00 am to 3.00 pm.

Employers attacked the system with excuses like the sleepiness of the scholars - recommending an educational test prior to employment. Recommendations of this sort would have been a fiction for the poor unless education was free and universal. Realistically satisfactory education required a change in the economic and social circumstances of the working class and poor so as to make child employment less of an economic necessity, in so doing freeing a future generation from the criminal neglect of its parents.

In the meantime, the extension of the Factory Acts from one industry to another coincided with a change in the manner of regarding the system of regulation and inspection that had been gradually built up in the textile industry. Legislation for this industry had been demanded on the grounds of certain definite abuses, generally with the implication, tacit or avowed, that

these evils were peculiar to textiles or the factory system. The opposition could sometimes retaliate by showing that there was no special virtue in the hardware, pottery, or metal trades, and no special vice in weaving or spinning that children, women or young persons, should be less protected in the one than the other. As prosperity in the textile industry was shown to have gone ahead and not to have been weakened under the Factory Acts, legislation was extended elsewhere, the unforeseen result being that children moved to the non-regulated agricultural work or the workshops where stringency was less severe. In mines where an educational standard was required, a noticeable tendency developed to lessen education all round to a minimum. What was required was a system of enforcing attendance upon young children.

Without compulsory attendance, raising the age of employment could not secure education previous to employment but on the contrary, diminished the total amount which the child was likely to obtain. Parents did not send their children to school before going to work because they thought it was superfluous when attendance was compulsory later. It was a problem that the education acts only went a part of the way to solve. The difficulty of the half-time system administered under the education acts and the same or similar system under the Factory Acts arose when children under the first were

in enjoyment of a privilege and under the second were subject to an exceptional obligation. Nevertheless with state aid, it was possible at least to build adequate schools. Only restrictions upon the hours of child labour could fill the places.

Possibly because of the larger numbers of children involved, the combination of mental and manual labour had worked marginally better in England. In Scotland with a smaller population special arrangements had to be made. Schoolmasters disliked intensely the half-timers in their classes who were worse educated than rural children. A combination of the payment by results system and general dislike meant they were educationally ignored, especially if they were duller or had different habits. No such prejudice existed in England, where the teaching profession was less well educated. Working men themselves reacted to what they saw as professional snobbery but to little avail.¹⁸⁹

Some authorities imagined that it was on account of the comparatively higher standard of school children in Scotland that the contrast between factory children and others was so marked. Daniel Walker's evidence before the factory commission on this issue dispelled some of the confusion; ¹⁹⁰

"Yes but there is a great misapprehension there again with reference to the superior attainments of children in Scotland. My impression is that the children in the manufacturing towns in England are much better educated than the children in the manufacturing towns in Scotland.

Education is much more general amongst the factory children in the towns of Lancashire and in the West Riding of Yorkshire than in the manufacturing towns in Scotland."

"... in the manufacturing towns, education is very much neglected in Scotland."

"... there is a great delusion abroad as to the superior education of the people in the towns of Scotland."

Undoubtedly the lack of accommodation and prejudice on the part of schoolmasters and school inspectors towards the half-time system in Scotland, meant a fair trial was out of the question. Fair trial or not, it was the growing army of the unoccupied that gave cause for alarm in some quarters.

Now that we have dealt with working youth, we must turn our study to what has come to be understood as the outcast population. Transmitted educational deprivation in the case of working children was passed on by the geography of a region; rural as opposed to industrial, and more importantly by the relative poverty of parents in the substratum below the skilled occupations. Where an able-bodied adult's wage was insufficient to maintain a family, working children were inevitable. When an adult was not inclined towards learning or the social milieu of the community discouraged personal advancement, a self-educated or well educated young worker was a rare phenomena. These pressures, both economic and social, influencing the family as a closed unit, say little about varying family predicaments.

In the next two chapters, an analysis will be made of the results of internal family dislocation; the death of a wage earner for instance, marital breakdown, or the mantle of foundling or orphan status. That proportion of the population labelled as criminal was of particular importance for the growth of new conceptions and aspirations in Scottish education. For attaining the enviable reputation of being first in this field, Scotland made all the headway of the pioneer, and all the mistakes.

Chapter VII

Study 2 - Education of the Unemployed Child: The Criminal Child

"The only school provided in Great Britain by the State for her children is - The Gaol!" ¹

a) Definition

The term 'unemployed' rather than 'unoccupied' is used in the title of this chapter to emphasise the relation that existed between education and the ability to pay, or formal schooling and the attractions of the factory or street. If a family was too poor to afford school fees, the children either accepted work to supplement the family income, remained idle at home engaging in unremunerative labour, or wandered the street to be tempted into a life of crime.

'Labour time' was at the heart of the reproductive mechanism of the industrial population and loss or absence of labour resulted in unemployment. Inevitably formal schooling was a luxury that interfered with this mechanism. Unemployment for the young then comes to mean being neither at school nor at work.

Given the opportunity, few workers would have voluntarily opposed working as it was the only way to survive, and unemployment was a hardship from which only a few professional criminals could eke out a way of life. Outside the apathy and carelessness of the less educated parents, the payment of school fees prohibited school attendance and with it the power to

appropriate knowledge. The contribution of poverty was to swell the numbers of the non-productively employed.

How large was this unemployed or unoccupied group among our usual sample of children from 5 to 15 years old? An illustrative, but not altogether accurate example can be taken of Glasgow over a fifty year period. A previous Table 6 (I) for the whole of Scotland, 1851 to 1891, details the number employed at a relatively constant figure of between 9% and 13% of the age group, with the unoccupied group falling from 43% to 10%.²

Town districts follow proportionally the same trend, although less are at school and more are employed. For towns like Dundee, Paisley, and Glasgow, the picture is somewhat different. Given the necessary adjustments, the Glasgow employed averaged 13% of the age group between 1846 and 1871, thereafter it contracts to 10%.³ Children neither at school nor at work between 1846 and 1871 constitute 40% to 50% of the whole number, more likely the latter figure as we go further back into the nineteenth century. Even during the era of government legislation 1872 to 1900, Glasgow had on average 11% more children unoccupied than the Scottish mean.

Just how many of these children could be labelled criminal is the most difficult of all estimates from which to draw clear cut conclusions. Tables of juvenile offenders committed for trial or bailed define

the incorrigibles, but have little relevance with regard to undetected offences. Inmates of institutions for the young dealt with the convicted, but thousands escaped the net. If we include illegitimates, vagrants, orphans and paupers, among those most likely to figure in our estimates, then some one in five children fall into the category of criminal or semi-criminal. After establishing this relationship, it remains to define the style of life of the unemployed sector.

The strict breakdown of the youthful population in this way, is in a certain sense illusory. Periods of schooling, employment and idleness became the life style of certain occupational groupings depending on weather, fortune, or season. On the whole, the three states of existence did devolve upon different sexes, groups or occupational classes. Girls were always less apparent at school than boys and less in evidence at work except in certain female industries like textiles. Their presence was felt more widely at home where they were employed by their parents. Even needlework and knitting for girls in the industrial department of week-day schools,⁴ implied an education for non-productive labour or preparation for attending to the wants of the rich.

When the Factory Acts restricted labour at least up until the age of 15, without the suitable option of the unregulated trades, idleness was encouraged. Unemployment was not encouraged by the spread of factory

regulations to all trades, because children stayed in these jobs only a short while. A swift turnover in agriculture was particularly apparent. Unco-ordinated idleness was however successfully stamped upon when compulsory education swept the streets clean of children.

Where street trades like flower selling, hawking and costermongering were common, large numbers of the unemployed would be unofficially employed though never enumerated. Many parents considered part-time or intermittent employment of their children too inconsequential for inclusion in census forms. Also many children were sick or ill and not regular school attenders, getting what education they had at the hands of parents or friends and thus appearing on school rolls, but rarely being present. They might have been like Dickey Perrott in Arthur Morrison's novel A Child of the Jago. Dickey went to school, that is, he turned up now and again at irregular intervals;

"... most parents were of Josh Perrott's opinion; that school going was a practice best never begun; for then the child was never heard of and there was no chance of inquiries or such trouble" 5

Gaffer Hexam, the lighterman father of little Charley, in Dicken's novel Our Mutual Friend, was typical of many who were jealously opposed to their son's gaining an educational advantage over them. On two occasions Gaffer's children, Charley and Lizzie Hexam, talk together;

C - "I can't so much as read a book, because if I had, father would have thought that I was deserting him." 6

L - "You can't deny that because father has no learning himself he is set against it in you." 7

On Charley's leaving to seek his fortune out of learning, the father raves;⁸

"His own father ain't good enough for him. He disowned his own father. His own father therefore, disowns him for ever and ever as an unnatural young beggar."

What other men might say was ever present in his mind;⁹

"They says to one another 'Here comes the man as ain't good enough for his own son' "

In other ways the composition of the family was important. Regular drunkenness would sink an otherwise respectable family into poverty,¹⁰ or separation (usually of the father) and death or illness, threw all and sundry onto the streets or into the poorhouse. Unwanted illegitimate children meant that a large proportion of children were left unregistered to become orphans, or swell the reserve army of the uneducated and unemployed. Some idea of the size of the problem can be gauged when it is understood that in 1861, there were 9,856 illegitimate births¹¹ and between 1861 and 1870, 9.7% of all births were illegitimate in Scotland, amounting to a total of 110,061 children.¹²

However unfortunate the tragedies through which a particular Victorian working class family passed, the class as a whole can be divided into certain sub-strata.

There were paupers, beggars, vagabonds, street sellers, entertainers, collectors and wandering folk, who overlapped into the criminal and semi-criminal classes. Children of these groups were known by various titles, most commonly the 'Street Arab' coined by Thomas Guthrie, but also ragamuffins, blackguards, hottentots, urchins, rag tag and bobtail, hobble-de-hoy and waifs and strays.¹³ The centre of their location was primarily the street where with some luck, horse-holding, errand running, parcel carrying and the like, were open to the astute and adventurous.

To some boys whose parents were not in poverty, the young street urchin became a hero. He could easily find himself there through maltreatment by parents or masters, by companionships formed in tender years, orphanhood, or the training of the costermonger to a street life. Often vagrant dispositions and tastes on the part of children caused them to be runaways. In a word they were 'anybody's children' working for 'bunse',¹⁴ and combining a street career with a lodging-house existence.

An orphan would probably find a start with a few lucifer matches, bootlaces, fly-papers, water-cresses or fuzees. Henry Mayhew noted;¹⁵

"Those who may have run away from a good school, or a better sort of home as far as means constituted such betterness of course form exceptions. So do the utterly stupid."

Yet the number of the well educated class supporting themselves by street selling was not large.

Besides the children of respectable working men who had fallen on hard times, there were two other groups. Henry Mayhew classified these as 'Those who cannot work' and 'Those who will not work'¹⁶ The former were inmates of poorhouses, prison hospitals, asylums and almshouses. Some were incapacitated through age or were sick, crippled, insane or idiotic. Owing to a glut or stagnation in business, cotton spinners, iron-workers or railway navvies lost employment. A change in fashion in the button making trade or tailoring, combined with the introduction of machinery as in hand-loom weaving, put many out of work. Dock labourers, builders and street sellers, were particularly vulnerable to the seasons or weather.

'Those who will not work' provided Victorian philanthropy with a rich harvest for channelling reforming zeal. They were the vagrants and professional beggars, and cheats, thieves and prostitutes along with their dependents. These persons objected to labouring for their own living, preferring to become a professional criminal class that lived on the food procured by the labour of others.

The activities of vagrants, beggars and unlicensed hawkers who roamed in gangs or tribes making periodical tours through different parts of Scotland, was well documented by the Inspectors of Constabulary. In 1860 there were some 34,333 vagrants, beggars and unlicensed hawkers in Scotland,¹⁷ increasing to 68,036 in 1869,

13,500 of whom were children.¹⁸ Many became the inmates of casual wards of poorhouses. The child could be a runaway apprentice, or driven from his home by the cruelty of his parents to grow wild in the streets. Girls who ran away from master or factory employment found shelter in the tramp ward.¹⁹ When a young tramp had a keen intellect combined with an exceeding love of mischief or was averse to continuous labour of any kind, it was probably a hangover from the rapid industrialisation that centred itself in a mainly rural and unregulated economy.

The juvenile vagrants thus constituted, were the main sources from which the criminals of the country were continually recruited and augmented.

The education of this vast amorphous group of unoccupied Victorian children was either informal, like that of James Burn the beggar boy who learnt to read from his stepfather, or more usually ad hoc at the hands of well meaning persons. The more educable of Glasgow's street dwellers were fodder for the city missionary or Sabbath School, but even these agencies failed to attract the inmates of the teeming rookeries.

Tentative beginnings were made as early as 1812 by John Wood of Edinburgh after riots in that city, but his was only an isolated school experiment. By the 1840's special establishments were evolved to deal with this sub-proletariate each handling its own substrata; the

ragged and industrial schools for the orphans or potential criminals, the reformatories and prisons for habitual offenders, and the orphan hospitals for the neglected; while the poorhouse coped with pauper incumbents. The movement for reform was a vast exercise in child saving and we will investigate each aspect in turn.

b) Ragged Schools and Industrial Schools
The Early Beginnings

Ragged schools and industrial schools throughout the nineteenth century were used as synonymous terms and yet remained distinct in several features,²⁰ a distinction which will become much clearer as we trace their history. Government legislation tended to gloss over the frills of definition and earnestly strived to establish them as semi-penal institutions.

In their purest form, ragged schools catered for children whom from parental poverty or dress were unacceptable in day schools. The Ragged School Union which sprang into active life in London in 1844 with 19 schools²¹ was an early extension of Sunday Schools. Unlike Scotland and the provincial ragged schools, the London ragged school movement had a central organisation. Being jealous of its autonomy, it continually dreaded the interference which attended government inspection - a characteristic from which their Scottish companions were entirely free.

A classification of the schools exhibiting the lack of uniform organisation was conveniently made by William Watson, the founder of the Aberdeen Industrial Feeding Schools.²² A ragged school was;

- 1 A place where ragged children congregate in the evening to get two or three hours instruction in reading and writing from unpaid teachers.
- 2 It is a place where ragged children assemble in the morning and get three or four hours gratis instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic from paid teachers.
- 3 It is a place these children go to in the morning, get breakfast and four or five hours gratis instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic from paid teachers.
- 4 It is a place where the children get two meals and gratis instruction in the three R's from paid teachers, but no industrial training.
- 5 It is the place where the children assemble at seven o'clock in the morning, get breakfast, dinner and supper, three hours instruction in reading, writing, arithmetic and geography and are employed five hours in useful industry, each returning to his own home at night.
- 6 It is the place where the children are treated exactly as in No. 5, with this difference, that some of them sleep in school dormitories.
- 7 The same as No. 6, with the difference that all the children sleep in school dormitories.

Dominant above all in Scotland, as we shall see, was the ethic of parsimony, that is why No. 5 was the best description of their operations. There was little of the full blown religious philanthropy current in England, and little of the amateurish spirit either. Scotland's innovation had something new to offer in industrial training, i.e. education conducted on the

lines of a small business.

The inclusion of industrial training was based upon the notion that habits of industry could be inculcated by making labour pleasurable.²³ It also encouraged children to gain their bread by the sweat of their brow while developing a notion of 'valuable property' - namely that obtained by their own industry. The explicit intention of these schools was to train children to contribute to their own support by the acquisition and practice of simple industrial skills and thereby not merely 'to relieve the indigent but to prevent indigence itself'. It constituted a powerful argument for them being a rate saving form of provision for the children of the poor.²⁴ Ultimately the rationale for these assumptions lay deep in the fabric of eighteenth century life and poor law legislation.

The Scottish Poor Law Acts of 1579, 1597 and 1617 had laid down that poor children were to be trained to labour, and formed the foundation of a philosophy in which the idea of an industrial school could develop.²⁵ Beggars' bairns or beggars' children it seems could become the property of anyone willing to keep them. In exchange for meat and clothes the apprentice was bonded into slavery for life. Schools more akin to spinning schools had been given encouragement as early as the seventeenth century in acts specifically 'in favour of manufactories, masters, workers, thereintell, servants

and prenteiss',²⁶ and poor children, vagabonds and other idlers could be taught to mix wool, spin worsted or knit stockings.

Barely a century passed before other outgrowths appeared. Technical schools were set up by the Board of Trustees for Manufactures,²⁷ and later by the Commissioners of Annexed Estates on estates forfeited by the Rebellion of 1745. In 1783, the S.S.P.C.K. had 20 such spinning schools.²⁸

In much the same way English opinions were changing too. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the outcry over the number of the poor and the tax imposed for their relief had arrested the attention of the English Parliament. The House of Commons charged the Commissioners of the Board of Trade to seek out the causes and remedies of the evil. John Locke, the philosopher,²⁹ as secretary to the Board, was entrusted with the task; and in the report, which was submitted to the judges, he established as a fact, that "...more than half the poor who were then receiving relief were in a condition to work"³⁰ One of the principal measures which he proposed was the establishment, in each parish of a school for work. He says;³¹

"...the children of the poor, from the age of three to fourteen should be lodged, fed, clothed and put to work at this school. The country tradespeople should be bound to take as apprentices the half of these children and to keep them till the age of 23; the farm proprietors and the farmers should receive the rest, in the same capacity and for the same time."

Locke calculated that the labour of these children up to the age of 14 would cover the expense which they could have occasioned to the school. The project was brought forward in the shape of a bill and presented to Parliament in 1705 but was never adopted.

Industrial training combined with instruction and religious teaching were views entertained by Prime Minister Pitt, barely a century later. An outline of his plan was presented in a bill to Parliament in 1796. It had for its objects the establishment of a school for work in every parish or incorporated district, for the purpose of instructing the children in different trades and manufactures. The parishes would have been at liberty to maintain their poor children in the working schools, or to lodge and then feed them there or give them work to do at home. Unfortunately Pitt's bill met the same fate as Locke's.

Not least was the resistance of the poor themselves who in a period of expanding poor relief, had come to believe that they had an unqualified right to financial support for themselves and their families without any obligation to send their children to local industrial schools. In any case, they preferred their children to work even as casual labourers in the normal employments of the locality rather than spend their time acquiring skills irrelevant to the needs of local employers.³²

Irrespective of opposition from many quarters, the school of industry continued to have its enthusiastic supporters. The most famous was Sarah Trimmer who founded her own school of industry at Old Brentford in England. In her widely read Economy of Charity published in 1801, she urged the setting up of similar schools in every parish in the land, financed from poor rates. Apparently little seems to have been done until the after-effects of the French Revolution changed opinions radically.

In much of British thinking before 1840, the influence of events and experimentation on the continent was strong. M. de Fellenberg, a student of Pestalozzi opened the first industrial school for agricultural training in Hofwyl, Switzerland in 1806. Although his training of beggar boys had been unsuccessful as it deprived them of liberty in return for hunger and punishment, Fellenberg's originality lay in the idea that the same means which rendered the individual capable of self-support - namely his development as a worker - should be made the chief agent of his education.³³

Later in Paris in 1840, M. Freger published a work on the dangerous classes and methods of ameliorating them. In the same year two men, M. Demtry and Bretignieres established an asylum at Mettray for the reformation of young criminals. This occasion was

significant as the asylum was the forerunner of all British efforts in child reclamation and reform.

Events more important than any of these experiments occurred in Europe in the 1840's, and informed sources declared;

"The insurrection and slaughters which have deluged with blood almost every great city in Europe have formed a fearful command on the mistake and neglects of governments." 34

"The dangerous classes in England, no less than in France, consist of those whom vice or poverty or ignorance - generally all three - have placed in a state of warfare with social order" 35

Clearly a co-ordinated policy for coping with civil disorder had to be called into being. Translated into local terms, this meant the criminal, neglected, dissolute and abandoned needed the sanctuary of civil control.

Burgh reform in Scotland in 1833 made people aware of their civic responsibilities for policing and delinquency. Two acts in 1839 allowed county committees of supply to maintain a county police force and take charge with magistrates of prisons. It brought the liberal element in government face to face with the numbers of children convicted as criminals for trivial offences. The civic duty was, therefore, more than just imprisoning offenders, but obviating their existence, particularly when more children were in the streets as the Factory Acts made employment for children scarcer. It was to satisfy this issue that special

schools came to the aid of the authorities.

It was not surprising therefore that the ragged and industrial schools, devised to suppress begging and vagrancy, developed hand in hand with the concept of delinquency. They had a history punctuated as much by personalities as by legislation. Characters such as Mary Carpenter, the Bristol Sunday School teacher, and Anthony Cooper (Lord Shaftesbury) dominated all debates, while Thomas Guthrie and Sheriff Watson of Aberdeen, 'The Children's Sheriff' spoke for Scotland.

The prestige of founding the first ragged schools for street arabs unable even to pay the lowest school fees, went to the shoemaker, John Pounds of Portsmouth. Pounds had at the age of 15 crippled himself for life by falling into a dry dock. His sedentary existence and regard for children materialised into a school for ragged children opened in his own workshop in St. Mary Street in 1818. It later went on to become a national success.

While not wishing to underestimate Pound's altruism, it is too easy to attribute the origin of institutes to individuals. Probably the most flourishing field for ragged activity was the offshoot of Sabbath Schools, but such enterprises, being mostly unco-ordinated and under-financed, soon decayed. Turning to Scotland we must go to Aberdeen, the city that pioneered early experiments in criminal education.

The impetus for industrial education in Aberdeen during the 1840's arose from the confused state of allegiances after the 1843 Disruption.³⁶ Evangelicalism welded itself to a growing responsibility for the worsened conditions of the poor. Light was thrown into the recesses of the underworld by men like Alexander Brown who significantly wrote under the name of Shadow.³⁷ On encountering a suitable subject for a ragged school, Brown struck up a conversation with the match seller;³⁸

"Well my boy, what keeps you out so late as this?"

"To sell my matches sir"

"What is your name?"

"Johnny"

"How old are you"

"Don't know, but guess I'm seven or eight"

"Is your father alive?"

"No he's dead, is Paddy -----"

"Is your mother alive?"

"Yes; but she's owre auld to dae anything"

"How many brothers and sisters have you?"

"I've two brithers and a sister"

"What does your eldest brother do?"

"He gets auld papers and sells them"

"What does your other brother do?"

"He sits in the hoose wi' my mither; he's wee'r than me"

"And what does your sister do?"

"She sells sticks"

"Then how is your mother supported?"

"By us gaun oot"

"What do you do going out?" -

(Shows a farthing) "Gets a box o' matches, sells it for a bawbee, and gangs on until I mak' thrippence"

"And when you get threepence, what do you do?"

"I gang hame wi' it"

"Have you got that yet?"

"No"

"When do you expect it?"

"In a wee; I manna gang hame until I get it, for we daurna sell the morn."

"What do you earn generally a week?"

"Three shillings a week."

Convinced it was useless to send a child to prison for begging when begging and stealing was the only way he could subsist, Sheriff Watson of Aberdeen opened a soup kitchen as a temporary school house in May 1845, and obtained 75 children apprehended by the police in the act of begging.

Watson, the son of a Lanarkshire sheep-farmer, was Sheriff in 1829 until he retired in 1866.³⁹ Twenty years before, a female industrial school was carried on in Chronicle Lane, but was partial and superficial. The first successful Juvenile Industrial Feeding School assisted by Mr. Thompson and Professor Brown of Kings College, was held in an old seamen's chapel in an upper floor in 1841 with a complement of 30 boys attending voluntarily. The Aberdeen Herald in September 1844,

made a printed plea for it written by William Thom the renowned Inverurie poet;⁴⁰

"If 'guid company' which poverty parts will
not heed your grim, old house and the helpless
outcasts there, let curiosity plead for one
visit ...

Nothing in that meagre building to attract,
no element therein to attract the soft eye of
taste, nor atone for prunella spoilt, yet oh!
there is something will some day speak in
words of fire and when that voice goes forth,
happy are they and blessed who have looked
in sorrowing kindness on yon shreds of bruised
humanity.

Chilly, and forlorn looks the House of Industry,
yet that house holds an hundred almost sinless
souls in safety.

But the other day they were gathered from your
lanes and entrys, from perdition to peace, a
fountain amidst a desert of souls, a redemption
on earth - these snatchings from the Kingdom of
Darkness! Go to Chronicle Lane, - look care-
fully at these sharp little fellows and think
of your own safety if of nothing else.

Look at the fine, rude, raw material here, ready
to be manufactured for better, for worse.

In these hundred boys as they are being trained,
you have an equivalent for 100 patent locks,
forty policemen, two transports, and one hangman.
Look at them again, and then turn to that little
box if you have a sigh and a sixpence about you.
God bless you!

Leave the sixpence at any rate."

By 1844 it had retrieved 100 boys.⁴¹ Fed upon
potage and milk for breakfast and supper, and a various
dinner diet, they were taught to read and write, tease
hair and make salmon nets. The cost amounted to twopence
per head with an annual expenditure of £350 in rent and
wages.

A similar female school of industry was opened by
a missionary, Liz Ogilvie, on 5th June 1843 in Long Acre,
with the Free Church and Church of Scotland ladies
splitting in 1847 to make two schools in one place.

The Free Church Female Industrial School was later called Sheriff Watson's School on a site in Skene Street, while a Church of Scotland school flourished as the North Lodge School in King Street, Aberdeen. Visits by Watson to various cities encouraged the Dumfries Industrial School, opened in March 27th, 1846. Others quickly followed suit in Greenock, Inverness, Falkirk, Rothesay, Ayr and Stranraer.⁴²

Against all odds the founders of these Aberdeen schools hoped the intellectual, moral and physical condition of children would be improved. Their constant fear was that a residential qualification would sanction and encourage the neglect of parental duty. A compromise was struck and a departure made from London ragged night and day schools, with industrial training and feeding. Unlike London schools it was to ensure that they would reach the class of children for whom they were established. Watson admitted that the English system of evening ragged schools had not found favour "...with the calculating and practical Scot"⁴³ Believing that free ragged schools did not increase school attendance nor take in the poorest, feeding was the answer, and Watson at one stroke raised the ragged school to the status of a public institution.

While Sheriff Watson remained a provincial figure, Dr. Thomas Guthrie of Edinburgh assumed the mantle of national apostle of the ragged schools, issuing the first

of his famous 'pleas' on their behalf in 1847⁴⁴ Guthrie saw that the metamorphosis of the neglected child from unproductive to productive labourer could be brought about with the combination of the three R's, industry, gospel truths and rationed diet. Upon the calculation that some 2,000 children in Edinburgh were in need of a ragged school,⁴⁵ the Original Ragged School opened in 1847 in a school room in Ramsey Garden Castlehill, strictly for preaching the Protestant faith. In fact, it became three schools, one for boys, one for girls and one for infants.

A large proportion of the managers of the Original Ragged School were Free Churchmen with a sprinkling of members of the Established Church and United Presbyterians. Inevitably, a religious protest ensued over the exclusion of parity of esteem for catholics. The struggle lasted until a considerable party headed by Lord Murray and afterwards Lord Dunfermline seceded to found the United Industrial School on less sectarian principles.

The new venture was sited in two flats of a large building in South Grays Close in the High Street, and industrial school was chosen as the name rather than ragged to avoid the humiliating brand of their original misery being fixed upon the children.⁴⁶ Traditional ragged school occupations like picking oakum, or teasing hair were not encouraged to avoid a training in pauperism. Fifty children under 12 were admitted when the school

opened, rising by 75 after the first year,⁴⁷ and every child of able bodied parents was rejected.

After a 7.30 am opening and before breakfast, children washed and cleaned their shoes and took religious instruction until 11.00 am. At eleven o'clock, two classes, one for three R's and one for industrial work split up until noon, when there was an interchange, before a 6.30 pm supper. Girls performed separate duties in cleaning, cooking and kitchen work, and the boys were engaged in tailoring, shoemaking, carpentry, boxmaking, printing and bookbinding. After school the pupils returned home.

By 1851 Edinburgh had three schools. The Original Ragged with 210 pupils, the United Industrial with 100, and the Rev. Messrs. Paul and Veitch's Ragged School with 68. Competition was greatest between the two rival schools. In a letter to the Scotsman,⁴⁸ glaring deficiencies in Guthrie's schools regarding the proportion under industrial training, and attendant desertions, were made public knowledge.⁴⁹

Religious rivalry of this nature accompanied widespread claims made on behalf of these new public institutions. At first the causes of poverty and pauperism were located in the improvidences and intemperance of parents, so the inculcation of habits of temperance and thrift through schools and penny savings banks looked like preventative medicine. Only

later did Watson admit through persuasion that destitution was caused by the inability to obtain regular employment.⁵⁰ Tables of committals of juveniles to prison showing diminutions in their relative to the whole number of committals, was regularly commented upon in school reports,⁵¹ thereby reinforcing the notion that education was an antidote to crime;

"The effect on the town was very apparent for instead of numbers of begging children who had previously infested the streets, in a short time scarcely one was to be seen." 52

Any increase in youthful vagrants was accompanied by a reciprocal increase in police vigilance to chase ('whip in') absconders into school. Unhappily, Watson in a work on vagrancy noted a marked increase in their numbers.⁵³ Pure vagrants had disappeared by 1870, instead they were converted into certified pedlars, free of police control under the Pedlar's Act of that year. However, children still continued to be brought up from infancy as tramps and vagabonds. Watson lamented on the calculation that if half the money spent on the rural police were used for the education of the young, the number of vagrants would diminish.

Meanwhile, a less impassioned observer in London, Henry Mayhew, in the guise of the 'Metropolitan Correspondent', cast his watchful eye on the activities of the infant Ragged School Union.⁵⁴ Although the essentially industrial character of Scottish schools

bore little resemblance to the London model, the Scottish feeding schools were not entirely free from the same experiences and restraints. While ragged schools in London increased from twenty in 1845 to 62 in 1848, teachers from 200 to 882 and scholars from 2,000 to 1,283 "... the increase of the juvenile criminals of London has not abated one jot."⁵⁵ A hanging match, pugilist contest, or local fair would deprive ragged school teachers of a majority of their charges. The difficulty was the roving habits of many of the infants who migrated in flocks to other districts and roamed for weeks together over surrounding counties.

By careful comparison of statistics, Mayhew proved that juvenile depravity fell before the establishment of the Ragged School Union in 1844 and rose after it.⁵⁶ The conclusion was reached to the effect that ragged schools and allied institutions merely educated criminals - removing an offender from the utterly ignorant to the imperfectly educated class - as the majority of places above average in crime were above average in education.

The Westminster Superintendent of Police confirmed the fear that bad boys taught good ragged school boys unknown by the police to thief;⁵⁷

"Mere reading and writing is a harm to a vicious child. It makes him steal more boldly, because with more judgement, he sees prices marked."

Stated simply, the reduction in juvenile crime had to be removed at source by removing the rookeries. This feeling was echoed by Thomas Beames;⁵⁸

"Banish rookeries and the ragged schools will be remembered in the chronicles of the past."

The direct relevance of Mayhew's investigation to Scotland is most applicable in relation to industrial employments. On one occasion he took a tailor and a shoemaker with him to one school to judge the work.⁵⁹ The boy's proficiency in tailoring made them available subjects for the 'slopworker or sweater', consequently apprenticeship to a small master usually resulted in their doing a small quantity of work on their own account and underselling the very masters who employed them. Ragged industrial school apprentices addition to the labour market produced starvation wages through a lowered tailor's wage. Similarly, shoemaking threw boys into the clutches of slop home-workers or garret masters, a class of people always on the look out for cheap labour and the apprentice fee.

Unnerved by Mayhew's conclusions, Alexander Anderson made an attack on Mayhew in a letter in the pages of the April issue of the Chronicle,⁶⁰ blaming him for roguery and mischievous intentions. A reply by Mayhew in his defence led him to question the notion that the three R's could overcome the indisposition on the part of criminals to labour for their living.⁶¹ With evidence from Coldbath and Tothillfields prison, his argument was irrefutable; the number of imprisonments were less before, than after the inmates attended ragged schools.

In a similar vain, Charles Dickens tried to demolish the claims to greatness with mere sanitary logic;⁶²

"... the whole hot bed of flushed and exhausted infants exchanging measles, rashes, whooping cough, fever and stomach disorders as if they were assembled in High Market for that purpose."

Scotland played safe by streamlining its schools for regulated industrial usage, but like their southern neighbours they themselves were born out of, and survived next to, the mission schools or Sabbath School Unions and enterprising church congregations.

Realistically, success was a logical consequence of enhancing the economic and social condition on the inmates rather than actual changes in attitude. Feeding was the operative word and Scotland was in the vanguard. In drawing a child to a school and keeping it there it had a secret power.

c) The Middle Period 1850-1872

1) Public Opinion Regarding Education for the Criminal Working Class

The years after 1850 were notable for government grants, and the subsidiary organisations attached to industrial and ragged schools - the refuges, ragged churches and shoeblack brigades which not only added a unique texture to the romance of child reclamation, but were a triumph for charitable endeavour. On the darker side they witnessed the narrowing of the gap between English schools and their Scottish counterparts, primarily at the expense of the latter. Government

grants, while setting schools on a sound industrial footing, transformed them into penal establishments more akin to reformatory schools or refuges. Naturally lack of financial independence went hand in hand with lack of autonomy. Yet undeterred the Scottish ragged school achievement, if achievement it was, amounted to getting industrial school status sanctioned by government.

Progress in London was half-hearted and taken with deliberate caution. In October 1847 the managing committee of the London Ragged School Union decided to establish a school of industry "... on a similar plan to those in Edinburgh and Aberdeen."⁶³ Old Pye Street school was opened for the purpose. By 1856 industrial classes existed in half the schools, but few became certified industrial schools, accepting government help. From the start, the Union set its face against government assistance by spreading the fear of religious domination. They were afraid that if zealous teachers were unable to pass the educational tests imposed by the government, they would be replaced by those without a Christian vocation, or alternatively a subtle weeding out of rough pupils might take place to satisfy inspectors. Deliberate withdrawal from interference meant that well on into the 1870's, Metropolitan ragged schools tended to follow their own isolationist policy.

In the meantime, the agricultural colony of Mettray in France founded by the celebrated Ms. Demetry had excited much interest in Britain. The provisions of the

French penal code ruled that offenders under 16 years of age were held to have acted "sans discernement" i.e. without sufficient knowledge of right and wrong and to require correctional training rather than penal treatment.⁶⁴

It had its repercussions in Scotland. Here children of any age were liable to the criminal law and solitary confinement, and a child of 18 months along with its mother could be entered on the prison books. In pursuit of reform, Sir James Graham, Secretary of State in 1843, had pressed for the unity of government aid and philanthropic zeal to establish a large central reformatory school aided by a grant from the Treasury, and under government supervision.⁶⁵ However, during the mid 1840's the climate of opinion was changing in favour of a revision of the laws regulating the treatment of young offenders, so as to substitute (as in France) long compulsory detention for short and uncertain periods of confinement in a gaol.

Lord Houghton was the first to break ground by bringing in a bill in 1846⁶⁶ for the establishment of reformatory schools. Though criticised and rejected on grounds of practical detail, it was fairly accepted and approved in its principles and objects, so much so that in December 1851 an influential Conference was held at Birmingham, to consider the condition and treatment of the 'dangerous classes'. The Conference may be said

to have been the first important instrument for practically concentrating public attention on the question of how juvenile criminals should be dealt with, and for combining the hitherto scattered forces advocating reformatory or industrial treatment.

It dealt with three classes of child; those who had not subjected themselves to the law but ultimately became criminal, those already vagrants, mendicants and petty infringers of the law, and those convicted of a felony. A resolution was passed to the effect that 'adoption of a somewhat altered and extended course of proceeding on the part of the Privy Council is earnestly to be desired for those children who have not yet made themselves amenable to the law, but who by reason of vice, neglect or extreme poverty of the parents are not admissable into existing pay schools.'⁶⁷ The Privy Council replied with a refusal of aid on the grounds that teachers were not certificated and the buildings were inapplicable. To achieve results the Conference saw to the appointment of a Commissioner of the House of Commons, under the presidency of M.T. Baines, to whom the whole subject of juvenile delinquency and the schemes, both foreign and English for its practical treatment, were carefully investigated and reported upon.⁶⁸ The first report published in 1852 posited no definite opinions.

About the same time, Mary Carpenter published a seminal work on reformation, the outcome of some years

experience in Bristol.⁶⁹ She was born in 1807, the daughter of a non-conformist minister⁷⁰ and after the family moved to Bristol, Mary took charge of her father's Sunday School. It was the first of a number of institutions, missions, and reformatories she superintended until she opened a ragged school in 1846 at Lewins Mead. Gradually she became aware of the inadequacy of an English style ragged school to cope with the vagrant and landless classes.

The dilemma as she saw it was one of improving the goods and restricting the market, for the teaching and organisation of ragged schools had slowly improved, attracting scholars of a higher grade than was originally intended. The problem moved her to advocate the Scottish style of feeding school.

The terms 'perishing and dangerous classes' were symptomatic of the way post 1848 social reformers viewed the lowest strata of the working class. Those who, from ignorance or destitution, were liable to become criminals were labelled 'perishing' and those that had already received the prison brand for whatever offence were 'dangerous'.⁷¹ Mary Carpenter's remedy for them took the form of good free day schools for those who, without gratis education would remain uneducated, for parents in poverty who desired education for their children, or parents who were ignorant and from the Irish population. Her alternative to the severe punishment of the prison was to recommend reformatory school discipline.

The most important reform and the one that linked the work of Scotland's schools to future industrial school legislation was her proposal for making industrial school attendance compulsory. Because juvenile thieves would never attend voluntarily, local responsibility had to be harnessed in the form of a magistrates order to a direct municipal or parochial allowance for their upkeep. With the effect of schools on diminishing pauperism,⁷² it was seen as unjust that the burden of supporting the poor should be transferred from the legal ratepayer to the voluntary and benevolent subscriber, especially if the industrial feeding schools and the poor law could be brought into harmonious action. Here Scottish experience provided sound examples.⁷³

The reports of Glasgow industrial schools furnished evidence to prove that Glasgow was the only place where parish authorities contributed to their support.⁷⁴ Pauper children having a claim upon the parish were received to the schools for food and education at a rate of 1/6d per week. Undeniably, on previous occasions a large portion of the funds formerly granted for their maintenance and education were misapplied by parents or guardians. Mary Carpenter realised that for the country as a whole, sufficient provision could be made for children if legislative sanction were given to compel all parents to maintain their children, and those who by criminal neglect allowed them to be injurious to society, to pay the cost of their maintenance in the industrial school. Likewise the parochial board in all

cases where a claim could be established upon it, could transfer the sum allowed for the maintenance of the child from the parent to the school, where it could be shown that the moral training of the child was neglected.

The results demonstrated in Scotland convinced Mary Carpenter that the 'arresting of demoralisation' would only be resolved if industrial feeding schools were opened throughout the country. Her policies outlined the way thought on school provision for the lower sections of the working class was developing. While it combined experience with economy, it expressed the real nature of thought on juvenile delinquency i.e. a piece of poor law management in an age of expense-conscious local authorities.

When the second report of the government's commission on criminal and destitute children saw the light of day,⁷⁵ opinions had gelled somewhat. Its policy recommendations were the culmination of the 1840's experience; criminal children were amenable to rescue; education was preferable to punishment, especially with an industrial content; state and local funding was essential; ragged and industrial feeding schools were beneficial. As the example of continental institutions was highly commended, ragged and industrial schools were not to be excluded from the aid of the national grant under the distribution of the Committee of Council for Education, and minutes were to be framed specifically for this purpose.⁷⁶

Guthrie's evidence before the Baines Committee was the most enlightening of all as it traced the evolution of Guthrie's Edinburgh school from its early beginnings, to its role as a half-way house between street and gaol, There again, it countered all claims that legislative interference was foreign to Scottish conditions. In fact a law to allow the schools to have custody of children was favoured by Guthrie partly because Edinburgh did not have a local act equivalent to that in Aberdeen.

In 1850, his school was already doing what was enforced by later legislation, but doing it without aid, namely taking in cases committed by magistrates. It was a state of affairs that radically altered criminal convictions and the definition of the criminal child. Guthrie was convinced that without aid, schools in Edinburgh, Dundee, and Aberdeen were not efficient as far as they went, whilst in Edinburgh they had a larger proportion of juvenile mendicants in proportion to the whole mass than in any other town.

Although statistics of juvenile commitments to prison had fallen, he could not help admitting that magistrates had started sending children to the school who had been guilty of some petty crime.⁷⁷ Here lay the answer to the usefulness or otherwise, of all statistics used to show falls in crime rates. The diminution in number arose from the children being committed to schools instead of prison, but it did not

show a diminution of crime because the crime had been committed even though the child ceased to be counted as a criminal. In Aberdeen and elsewhere, favourable statistics compiled by Sheriff Watson could therefore be bogus. In fairness, juveniles sent to his school might not have been sent to prison, just whipped and returned to the street to become serious offenders later, but Guthrie had no sources from other towns to prove this. Glasgow ragged schools were taking in pauper children from poorhouses. On the other hand the children in Edinburgh were without parish and for them no provision was made whatever. Guthrie believed that as criminals were recruited from this class, the tables for Edinburgh were likely to be more favourable than Glasgow.

With regard to the future, the Edinburgh schools could not succeed by voluntary effort alone.⁷⁸ The government needed to lighten the burden of teaching expenses or transfer hospital funds for wider distribution, with pauper relief transferred to the maintenance of pauper industrial schools.

A draft of a bill to this effect had been drawn up by those interested in ragged school education, authorising magistrates to send children to industrial schools at parents expense, the prison board to pay funds if parents could not, or poor law boards if they were paupers.⁷⁹ Thomas Guthrie added a rejoinder based upon his own impressions;⁸⁰

"I believe if there was a white slave market in Edinburgh, they would sell their children for drink."

To give substance to the policies of the crime preventionists definitive legislation was needed.

2) Legislation

Some minor legislation occurred as early as 1847 when the Privy Council extended grants for schools of industry in order to erect workshops, purchase tools and reward the master for successes.⁸¹ Alongside this a deputation from Birmingham before the Committee of Council in 1852 and 1853, secured an allowance of 10/- per scholar per annum for ragged and industrial schools,⁸² but they received little overt recognition as legal agencies.

However, the first major Industrial Schools Act passed in 1854, applied to Scotland exclusively⁸³ and established the legal machinery of committal. A Scottish magistrate was empowered to commit to a certified industrial school and to detain there for five years any young person apparently under 14 found begging or wandering, or not having any home or proper guardianship, having no visible means of subsistence, though not charged with an actual offence. In the event of the order being made, the parent, if solvent, was bound to pay for the maintenance of the child in so far as he was unable to do so, and the expense was made recoverable from the parochial board of the parish to which a pauper child would have been chargeable. The school was to be approved

by the Secretary of State, the rules confirmed by the Lord Advocate, and the power of granting aid in the hands of the Education Committee of the Privy Council. There was no public assistance through the Home Office although it did certify the suitability of a school to fall under the operation of the act.

An allowance of 10/- per head was still made for schools under Mr. Dunlop's act as well as those not so certified,⁸⁴ until a further minute of the 2nd June 1856 was passed abolishing the old 10/- grant, and substituting it with a capitation grant of 50/- for every child in a certified industrial school whether committed by a magistrate or not.⁸⁵ Unhappily government generosity was repealed in 1857.

Three years after the Scottish industrial schools were recognised, a similar act for England, known as Adderley's Act, was introduced.⁸⁶ About the same time the Home Office which had hitherto granted 5/- per scholar per week to reformatory schools increased this to 7/-. Increasing confusion resulted in the minute of 31st December 1857 withdrawing aid from reformatory schools out of the education grant and setting forth conditions on which certified industrial and ragged schools could be aided. Its results were unforeseen and devastating, the capitation grant was reduced to 5/-. The minute of 1856 was so generous that it led to a great demand on funds, therefore many schools for sake of funds designated themselves as ragged schools. The check was imposed in

1857 virtually excluding free day schools, or ragged schools, unless industrial training was given. A certified industrial school could now get grants equal to half the rent of premises, a third of the cost of tools, teaching augmentation and capitation. A ragged school teacher needed three years service before entitlement to augmentation after an exam with a rating of competency equal to workhouse schools.

Schools receiving aid under the minute needed two signatures of magistrates stating that young persons in an establishment had been legally convicted of begging and vagrancy and had no proper home or visible means of support. Once again economy had beaten altruism. Grants were given only upon the guarantee of wretchedness, forcing a valuable institution into the role of a charity.

As with most pieces of legislation, Dunlop's Act was hard to enforce. In schools certified under the act scarcely any of the children were committed;

"... the clause enabling the parochial boards to withdraw such children on gaining security for their better protection having almost neutralised the direct operation of the statute altogether." 87

Provisions for compelling parents to contribute remained a dead letter. In the inspectors' reports up to 1861, mention is frequently made about children loitering in the town, and the parochial board tried to keep them off the rates particularly if the school was in a parish in which the children were not chargeable. Glasgow's industrial schools alone met with success and twelve boys and 46 girls, out of 118 and 98, were detained under the

act. Despite restrictions, by 1860, 15 industrial and ragged schools were certified under Dunlop's Act and one, Paisley ragged school, under this and the reformatory act.⁸⁸ Altogether they had 827 inmates or children committed for detention under the provisions of the act, in addition to 1,139 voluntary inmates.⁸⁹

Regardless of the legislation a further Conference held at Birmingham on January 23rd 1861 raised discussion, and dissent on the nature of education for the poorest classes, to a higher pitch. Within and without the educational movement, lines were clearly drawn on one issue - whether ragged schools should accept grants and whether they could stomach state interference.⁹⁰ It must be remembered that Scotland was well represented at these Conferences by men like Guthrie and Watson. The Birmingham Conference agreed that the expense of education for the lowest classes ought to fall upon the state.

There was one voice of scepticism, Mary Carpenter did not favour state education and in support of her argument she alluded to the United States where education was free, paid for by the rates, and yet the uneducated class still abounded. Characteristically, she believed the poor were fit subjects for Christian benevolence and not state aid, and she did not wish to see children become children of the state, although she showed reluctance to accept retrenchment in aid consequent upon changes in Privy Council minutes regarding industrial work.⁹¹ In effect government grants had raised the standard of schools so

that they left the class (for whom they were intended) behind, while raising the character of education beyond that which ragged children could attain. New evidence was slowly coming to light that ragged schools were attracting well dressed children whose parents were living on the borders of the ragged class, and who wished to keep their children separate from them.

To confirm or refute the allegations, another government investigation was under way into the education of destitute children, this time under the chairmanship of Sir Stafford Northcote.⁹² Here the tussle between Metropolitan voluntarism and the ethics of Scottish feeding schools was well defined, as was the conflict between philanthropists and educational economists. Robert Lowe and Ralph Lingen, of Revised Code fame, were present and their aura pervaded the whole enquiry.

Witnesses were restricted to London, Edinburgh, Bristol, and Aberdeen, but the committee in its report was forced to accept that there existed in the great cities and towns, a class of children untouched by any system of national education. This class consisted partly of the children of the very poor, many actual paupers in receipt of relief, and others in a condition scarcely superior to that of paupers, who were unable to spare the fees or provide the children with the dress suitable for day schools. Others were either cruel or self-indulgent, or the children were orphans, and thus deprived of proper guardianship and control. No precise statistics were

collected as to the extent of this class, but in London it was estimated at 60,000, and Guthrie estimated about 2,000 for Edinburgh.

Under certain circumstances, portions of this class had been brought by the operation of the law with the range of educational influences. If under the age of 16 they committed a breach of the law, they could at the discretion of the magistrate be sent to a reformatory. If under 14 years they were found begging, they could at a magistrate's discretion be sent to a certified industrial school. The tragic conclusion was that a child had to commit an offence before education could be guaranteed. Moreover, in the judgement of the Commissioners;⁹³

"... it entails very heavy expense upon the State and is objectionable upon that account, if upon no other."

The Commissioners concluded;⁹⁴

"... we consider that these institutions ought not to be regarded as a permanent feature of our educational system; but we do not think that the time has yet arrived or is very near at hand, when they could safely be dispensed with."

They saw no reason why they should not receive aid, but only on one condition - efficiency, to guard against abuse;

"...we are of the opinion that the assistance to given should be measured by the results produced."⁹⁵

Their conclusions were simple and economically effective, in line with current opinion on education viz. the Revised Code. No child should go to ragged school for whose education provision could be made elsewhere. The only measure for street children would be the industrial schools bill at that time passing through Parliament.

Aid through ragged schools in the form of feeding and lodging was to be abolished on the grounds that the recipients were fit objects for industrial schools. The only ragged schools to which relief could be given were those that neither fed nor clothed children, and the only children requiring their aid were the nondescript class not included in the above, and uncharted by the statistics.

As it was only on instruction that government inspection could be based, the contradictory nature of most English ragged schools and some Scottish ones with regard to a lack of emphasis on pure instruction as opposed to religion, militated against their success. Not surprisingly, infant schools which took children before they were contaminated appeared to strike at the root of an evil which the ragged schools attacked in its more advanced stages. For the first time a crusade was taken up on their behalf but for the wrong reasons - for economy, because they required only female teachers;

"A an instrument of civilisation the infant school is far superior to the ragged schools."⁹⁶

Any child falling through this net was recommended for missionary exertions.

Behind these views lurked a basic assumption about the lower classes, that children of the ragged class were not the children of parents who could not pay, but rather those who would not pay, and in giving money to the lower classes it would make them permanent institutions drawing down other schools to their level.

Assumptions or not, in 1861 two new acts came into operation.⁹⁷ In Scotland a consolidating statute of 1861 superseding Dunlop's Act. Classes of children now admissable were enlarged to include not only mendicant and destitute children, but children under 12 charged with an offence, and refractory children under 14. The possibility existed that parents might be ordered to pay up to 5/- a week. Combined with which the grants were withdrawn, giving an increased grant only for children committed by magistrates, with no grant for children not committed, amounting to 5/- in England and 4/6d per child in Scotland.

Such measures tried to ensure that the schools were used by those for whom they were intended. It was a death blow to ragged schools who had less than 5% of committed children and were seeking aid. The rationale for this reform was the prevailing accent on economy. Having decided that industrial schools were necessary, the government had used the enthusiasm of men like Guthrie to establish as many schools as necessary in the shortest possible time. The government had in mind schools set apart from other schools, and Committee of Council Minutes were bent upon not giving aid unless the schools were industrial in character and the scholars taken exclusively from the criminal and abandoned classes. In short, the position of the lower working class was viewed from the point of delinquency rather than education.

The basis for legislation for the rest of the century came in 1866,⁹⁸ when Scottish and English practice harmonised, putting the industrial schools of both countries on equal footing. The County Board in Scotland was entrusted with the power both of contracting for the reception of children and of contracting current expenditure for schools. Now a child under 12 if convicted (not of theft) could be sent to industrial school instead of reformatory school, and children 'outwith parental control' were sent at parents expense to be lodged, clothed and fed. The result was to swell numbers, and substantiate the growing belief that juvenile crime and the need for care and protection were one and the same thing, an approach very close to the modern concept of such schools.

Scottish ragged and industrial schools in the 1860's were merging their identity and changing their locale, but a distorted picture is presented if we create two distinctively separate institutions. Many ragged schools were supported by the church being non recipients of government aid, and many took upon themselves industrial training in one form or another. The future of the non-industrial ragged school was unclear. Where their organisers could not cope with the rough and tumble of everyday education, they disappeared as fast as they were born. Other schools were absorbed by the school boards, their usual rag bag of clients disinfected and licked into shape by the new rules and regulations.

Some idea of the variety of establishments appeared in the censuses. The 1851 census of schools⁹⁹ accounted for 17 schools in all with a total of 1,491 scholars, £5,455 in yearly contributions, and the majority of children between 5 and 15 years. Of ragged schools conducted by religious bodies, little or nothing was known, probably because many of them were ephemeral in nature disappearing as their leases expired, or were better classified as mission stations. Five industrial schools contributed an additional 301 children.

By 1867 the time of the Argyll Report, the picture was altogether different.¹⁰⁰ Because of faulty returns, the Commission failed to consider the majority of schools in the large cities, but it did account for a new re-grouping. We have now not only industrial schools, but female industrial, infant and industrial, ragged and industrial and plain ragged schools. The female industrial schools with exclusively female teachers were probably set up to teach girls to sew and knit for domestic service or perform household chores, contacting few of the real outcasts of society. The rural nature of the statistics reflects in the small number of ragged schools, which were of a predominantly urban origin. Hazardous generalisations as to school organisation in non-certified schools proved difficult in the 1860's because of this wide spectrum of provision.

d) 1872-1899 Eclipse of the Traditional Industrial School and its Absorption

In 1869 the school inspector declared with complete candour;¹⁰¹

"Certified industrial schools have now become so completely assimilated to reformatories in their necessary arrangements and regulations, and the main features of their management ... It is very difficult to establish any real distinction between these two classes of institutions except that the industrial school deals with the younger and the less criminal portion ..."

Before the passing of the industrial school acts, it was not so obvious. The children received into industrial schools were of the ragged and neglected class; but they were not sent by a magistrate's warrant to the school, were not consigned to compulsory detention, and were not punishable by imprisonment for absconding or wilful disobedience. The acts passed had successively consolidated and developed the legal status and operation of the schools, imposing on the managers the duty and responsibility of the custody, maintenance, and treatment of their inmates, they also defined the main conditions on which children were to be sent to them for vagrancy, begging and petty theft. By 1870 though, still called by the name of schools, they were in fact reformatories of a milder sort.

In accordance with the change of character, their objects, their locality and their mode of operation had been changing. Originally local schools brought the superintendent and teacher into more personal relationships with the children and concentrated their influence in a narrower circle. Being specifically designed and used as day schools, the majority of children found in them were day scholars. As they were established in the poorer

and more populous districts of towns, local institutions enlisted the support of magistrates and local residents. With the advance in city improvements, however, the local effect of such schools diminished markedly.

The movement of schools to the outskirts of the city meant a diminution in the number of scholars and a diminished interest by magistrates in the working of the industrial schools act.¹⁰² This move was not only sanctioned by city improvements, considerations of health and the necessity of more careful custody, but more varied out-door employment. The change rendered the attendance of day scholars in most cases impossible or very inconvenient, and confined inmates almost entirely to children regularly committed by magistrates for detention.

The admixture of day schools no doubt extended the usefulness of a local school, keeping up more thoroughly the relation of the children to the realities of the practical life going on outside. The fashion for sending all disorderly and vagrant children out of town to be boarded and fed, not only drove into schools the most criminal of the working classes, but left a void in the institutions of the city that the school board found embarrassing. A new form of day industrial feeding school came into being to bridge the void by enrolling children not eligible for reformatories or regular industrial schools. One of its aims was to feed children of the board whose parents were in poverty, the other was to

cope with a new class of child - the truant. After 1878 in England, apart from the day industrial school, there were special truant schools later called short-term industrial schools.

After the passing of the Elementary Education (Scotland) Act in 1872, school boards in Scotland were given the same powers of contributing to the establishment and maintenance of industrial schools which prison authorities possessed under Section 12 of the 1866 act, being given power to enforce the industrial schools act in their districts. Furthermore a new act, the Prevention of Crimes Act¹⁰³ added another class to the category of children who might be sent to industrial schools, viz. children under 14 of a woman twice convicted of crime. Similar powers existed under the English Elementary Education Act of 1870. With the Elementary Education Act of 1876¹⁰⁴ the number of children sent to industrial schools in England multiplied through the setting up of day industrial schools. In Scotland, the Glasgow Juvenile Delinquency Prevention and Repression act witnessed a growth of new agencies¹⁰⁵ not unlike their English counterparts. The expanding child population netted by the acts is proof that prior to the 1870's these children were members of the 'uncaught' class in the 'unoccupied' sector, those not criminal but wayward through parental negligence.¹⁰⁶

The last quarter of the nineteenth century ushered in the complete eclipse of the ragged school and its

absorption by school board authorities, but the industrial school, although changed in form, was strengthening;

"...to bring within the range of good teaching and good discipline the pitiable class of neglected and outcast children ... unfit and unsuitable without some preliminary training for admission into our ordinary elementary schools." 107

Implicit in this survey of education for the poorest of the Scottish population is the notion of a criminal class, but the proportion of the people in their 'teens and early twenties in the total number of offenders appearing before the courts, is so high as to suggest that what existed was not so much a criminal class but a criminal generation - that is, that criminal activity was a phase through which many people passed at a certain period of their life and out of which they later grew.¹⁰⁸ Though there is little evidence to prove this, in different towns, a number of criminals were juveniles who had honest jobs, or who would take one if possible, but who regularly engaged in crime as a species of by-employment. To explain this phenomena, various Royal Commissions referred to the superior attractions of criminal life.¹⁰⁹ That crime was the result of want alone was unfounded, as on the whole, honest people remained honest despite appalling suffering and great temptation.

e) Reformatories & Prisons - Last Resort for the Incorrigible

1) Reformatories

Statistically the 1850's witnessed a decline in the number of juvenile offenders and looking back on that period from later years, people saw it as a great watershed. Contemporaries were content to give the credit for this improvement to the reformatory school, but though the reformatory school helped to inaugurate the change, the real explanation is possible to be found in the improvement of conditions of life in the country as a whole. The 1850's left behind the 'hungry forties' to make way for a period of relative stability and calm.

Any upturns in the economy appeared to be played out at the onset of the Great Depression, as towards the end of the nineteenth century there were voices claiming that crime had begun to rise again. What is certain, is that even if it did rise, it did not reach the level that had existed in the early 1850's and before, nor did the criminal world return to its former size and importance. The Royal Commission on the Reformatories and Industrial Schools of 1884 accepted that gangs of young criminals had been broken up and an end put to the training of boys as professional thieves.¹¹⁰

Many years earlier during the 1840's a portrait of delinquency was built up by inference through detailed descriptions of criminal areas and evocative illustrations of the habits and manners of slum children. Alexander Thomson spoke for many when he put the responsibility for

crime firmly on the doorstep of drink, poor housing, brothels, penny gaffs or cheap theatres, 'wee pawns' in which small articles could be disposed of, flash-houses and bad books.¹¹¹ The literature particularly distasteful were the works on Dick Turpin and Jack Sheppard circulated in cheap book form and subscribing to the philosophy of robbing the rich for the poor.¹¹² On top of the condemnations came the fashionable theories of criminality. It was commonly believed that crime ran in the family and thus substantiated the popular Lombrosa thesis that boys were born into the world marked congenitally for a criminal career.¹¹³

Prisons were earmarked for particular blame as being too comfortable and prone to increase the number of offenders. The sentences were too short and diverse to act as a deterrent. Turning their backs on the pomp and circumstance of the law, nearly all reformers spoke with one voice in recommending useful labour as the richest educational ingredient.¹¹⁴ It is strange irony that while industrialists were trying to avoid combining education with labour, criminal reformers were encouraging it; "It should be a course of almost incessant industry from morning to night."¹¹⁵ Even religious men saw a fearful symmetry between heavenly ideals and Satan's strongholds; as God made the boys, there was something awfully wrong in man's institutions to have caused such an awful difference between rich and poor.¹¹⁶

Nevertheless, advocacy of the half-way house to

heaven in the reformatory school went on unabated. Before the Select Committee on Criminal and Destitute Children, evidence was given on behalf of the farm school system on the Continent by Joseph Fletcher, and the House of Refuge in Pennsylvania by J.R. Ingesoll. These schools evoked the distant envy of those in Britain eager to encourage new practices.

An early pioneer in criminal reform had been the Philanthropic Society for the Prevention of Crimes founded in 1788. In little more than half a century, the Society had gradually changed from a voluntary organisation with a rather diffuse conception of rescue and reform of the young, to a specialised organisation bent on the rehabilitation of delinquent boys. By the time of the Society's incorporation in 1806, it had established the first reformatory in this country at Bermondsey London, for delinquent and potentially delinquent children. Later men like Peter Bedford, the 'Spitalfield Philanthropist' and various London societies enthusiastically endorsed the French principle of treating boys differently from men.

It was not until the 1850s that reformatories were given legal backing. Before 1854 the only children legally detained in the reformatory were those under conditional pardon, the condition being that instead of suffering imprisonment, they should be detained in a school of this kind under voluntary management, but not subject to government rules or under government inspection.

In 1854 the first Reformatory Act (Youthful Offenders Act) was passed applying both to England and Scotland. The bill was introduced by Adderley, backed by Lord Leigh, adopted by Lord Palmerston the Home Secretary, and became known as Palmerston's Act.¹¹⁸

The reformatory was to be certified by the Secretary of State and inspected by an inspector of prisons. Power was given to the court convicting the juvenile offender under 16 to sentence him to detention in a reformatory for no less than two or more than five years, in addition to imprisonment in a gaol for not less than 14 days.

Treasury contributions for maintenance in whole or in part were authorised, and also compulsory contributions from the parent not exceeding 5/- per week in relief of Treasury charges. In 1866 the previous acts were repealed and the consolidating and amending act was passed.¹¹⁹ The most noticeable change was Section 14 with its important limitation on age; prohibiting an offender under 10 from being sent to a reformatory.

The acts set themselves up upon well ploughed ground in Scotland, as the Glasgow House of Refuge for Boys, founded in 1837 and built in Duke Street, played a dual role of industrial school and reformatory, gaining certification under both Dunlop's and Palmerston's Acts. It was the first reformatory in Scotland and the largest of its kind.¹²⁰ In accord with the prevailing climate of opinion, well meaning Glasgow citizens formed the Society for the Suppression of Juvenile Delinquency in Scotland. Their efforts materialised

in the passing of a local act in 1841 for suppression of delinquency in the city, and a levy of a penny in the pound on all rentals over £12 per annum was made throughout the city.¹²¹ Wayward girls were not left out of the Society's calculations, the Girls' House of Refuge, previously the Old Magdalene Asylum, was opened in 1840 and located in Parliamentary Road. After the passing of the act, children were considered to be more suitable cases for admission.

Before statutory regulation the Houses took in children from 8-14 years brought before the Lords' Commissioners of Justiciary who opted for the House rather than the prison. The greater number of cases came from the police courts and under the magistrates schedule could remain for seven years, although the average period was three years. It appears that manufacture of firelighters was the chief occupation carried on, with a view to profit rather than maintenance.¹²² A large garden of five acres occupied the boys and an emigration scheme was in full swing. During the 1860's a farm of 55 acres called Riddrie Farm was attached to the boys' school to cope with an increasing emphasis on farm labour. In 1887 the premises were considered unwieldly and unsuitable and Glasgow's House of Refuge on its old premises closed in 1887.

Not all opinion was entirely favourable towards these developments. The legislation for reform was viewed with suspicion by Sydney Turner, the Government Inspector;¹²³

"When the instruction is so good and the children are so well cared for, there is an evident danger of schools becoming attractive to careless and negligent parents as to means and circumstances, than it is intended or would be right to assist by them."

He feared a premium being put on vice. Worst of all reformatory education could become better than anything offered on the open market. To allay fears, Mary Carpenter reflecting upon the sound political economy of J.S. Mill tried to lessen the harm that could be done;¹²⁴

"It is because parents do not practice this duty and do not include education among those necessary expenses which their wages must provide for, that the general rate of wages is not high enough to bear those expenses and that they must be borne from other sources ... it is help towards doing without help."

While reflecting upon Edinburgh Original Ragged School, Turner was not convinced;¹²⁵

"In this point of view, I regret the handsome building, the uniform-like clothing which the children wear in the school and the band which has been formed among them. I fear they may act unfavourably upon the parents and make it a mark of distinction than of inferiority to attend the school."

Compared with Edinburgh Ragged School, Aberdeen Reformatory School had a;

"...simplicity and studious plainness of the buildings and arrangements of the institution which afford a most useful example of how much may be done without making such schools burdensome in their maintenance, or conspicuous in their external appearance." 126

commented Turner, in Glasgow Girls' House of Refuge;

"Plants are not the stronger or better prepared for the vicissitudes of ordinary out-door weather for being kept too long in the greenhouse." 127

Business economy and avoidance of waste were common threads

running through nearly all schools of this genre in Scotland, therefore, it was to be expected that they combined the Spartan with a self-effacing Puritan ethic; a combination that must have had its roots somewhere in Calvinist logic.

Such was the paradox of Victorian legislation that improvements in social and economic circumstances reduced crime, yet a boundary had to be fixed on what was to be achieved in school in case it was too attractive. Indeed, given the cheapness of reformatory aid, twopence per day per child in Scotland¹²⁸ and the general economies in clothing and maintenance,¹²⁹ the lot of the labourer outside must have been exceedingly depressing, hence R.W. Emerson's famous remark;¹³⁰

"The pauper lives better than the free labourer; the thief better than the pauper and the transported felon better than the one under imprisonment."

From these conditions the ambivalent attitude to schools arose. It was not surprising that a constantly recurring criticism of the provisions for young delinquents was based on the argument that it was only by committing a crime that children could gain access to education and industrial training. In counterbalance the education provided was often poor in quality, the work hard, the bulk of the money earned by the children being retained by the institution, and buildings, food and clothing left much to be desired. Some managers took this attitude even further by denying the right of

any former inmates of a reformatory to achieve a 'specially good appointment in the world'.

Once compulsory education was established and all working class children had been afforded access to elementary education, there was a pronounced and continuous process of change for the better in the material, educational, and industrial facilities offered by the reformatories. Once compulsory education had been introduced the ideas of the pioneers, which had at one time been revolutionary, tended to become reactionary and from the mid-70's onwards, the founders of reformatories and the many who had followed in their wake were overtaken by social forces which some of them could not accept.

By degrees in the 1860's and 70's inmates were younger; the proportion not before committed increased by half, the proportion twice or three times committed fell most, and hence the more ignorant class of children found themselves admitted. Consistently the Inspector opposed the educating of the hardened criminal together with the first offender, substituting home for criminal influences, but little if anything was done.

Other changes were silently taking place. Farm schools opened to invigorate diseased constitutions. The two biggest reformatory ships in the United Kingdom the 'Mars' and the 'Cumberland', modelled on the man-of-war took up anchorage on the Tay and at Loch Gail

Dumbartonshire. Boys were now being prepared for war service, and it was barely half a century on before they would become heroes in their own country after drowning in the battles of the First World War.

2) Prisons

That a Victorian child from the lower working class in Scotland was more likely to find himself in prison than in school is not in doubt. Similar severities did not affect the higher and more favoured classes of the community;

"Robbing orchards or hen-roosts is regarded only as a clever feat in the gentlemen's son at a public school and while the boy who steals lead from the top of a house is threatened with transportation on the next conviction, stealing knockers from the door by a young student is considered a spirited feat to be punished, if at all, only by a fine and a reprimand." 131

When a girl fell into crime the results were infinitely worse. The percentage of recommitments for juvenile females was usually much greater than for males. Young girls were generally much less prone to crime than boys of the same age, but their tendency to it rapidly increased with age and when they once embarked upon a criminal career they became more thoroughly hardened than the other sex.¹³²

As a percentage of total commitments (for trial or bailed), juvenile offenders were relatively low, declining from 522 in 1837, to 336 in Scotland in 1868, from 17% to 10% of all offenders. Prison education was more thoroughly the preserve of older inmates.¹³³ For this reason we need give only a little space to it here.

Simple thefts, assaults and housebreaking accounted for between 85-90% of all child criminal activity, by far the largest group being committed for theft.¹³⁴ As an indication of the total criminal activity of the age group, or an indication of the so called criminal class, the statistics undervalue its size and many activities went undetected. Also prison returns showed the number of committals not the number of individuals committed, hence the number of committals may show the frequency of crime, but not the number of criminals.

A logical consequence of the growing need for systemisation in prison discipline, and the discredit brought upon Scottish prisons by the revelations of prison inspectors, was the formation of a General Board of Directors of Prisons in 1839.¹³⁵ Aid by counties and burghs had been varying and uncertain, and prevailing opinion demanded an efficient and well regulated system of prison discipline with the maintenance of more secure and convenient prisons.

In pursuance of these aims and as a basis for education, a set of rules was drawn up to the effect that every prisoner sentenced to three months confinement or upwards, and who was unable to read and write easily, was to receive instruction in reading and writing.¹³⁶ Authorisation was given for the appointment of teachers of tailoring and shoemaking trades under the direct supervision of the governor and prison chaplain. The subordinate role of the teacher was clearly earmarked

by the inspectorate, who recommended the employing of persons of inferior qualifications and status.¹³⁷

The visible proficiency in reading and writing was traditionally low among criminals¹³⁸ and well selected libraries of interesting books of useful knowledge, free from immorality or irreligion, became attached to each of Scotland's 60 or so bridewells. By 1843 the Inspector reported that instruction in reading and writing was everywhere the rule, with more educationally advanced prisons also providing arithmetic as an extra. It seems that the greatest difficulty was in selecting suitable cheap books for the library,¹³⁹ for this reason Chambers' Miscellany of Useful and Entertaining Tracts was most in demand.

At the centre of the reformed prison education system was the General Prison at Perth for criminal prisoners viz. males sentenced for not less than nine months and females for not less than one year, besides criminal lunatics. Here the well stocked library was amply supplemented by weekday classes. Juveniles were divided into four classes for secular instruction on weekdays in three relays,¹⁴⁰ every prisoner who could read was supplied once a week with one religious and one secular book.

From looking through Director's Reports, it is difficult to assess the significance of prison education in the whole scheme of incarceration, it was probably like a typical prison menu- good on paper but indigestible even for the hungry. The mere fact that it could be a relief from the monotony of a long sentence must have

added something to its glamour and its success.

f) A Measure of Success?

In numerous ways measuring the degree of success achieved by these institutions poses more problems than it solves. From the point of view of the authorities, it was resolved simply into the questions as to whether the level of juvenile delinquency was relatively tolerable, or whether there was value for money.¹⁴¹ For the recipients, the underprivileged of the working class in Scotland, it boiled down to the opportunity for employment and protection from the insecurities of the labour market.

Educationally their success was dubious to say the least. The standard attained in literacy was not a high one, possible because of the difficulty of acquiring competent staff when many preferred the relative ease of the free enterprise day schools. The Government Inspector noted in 1877 when it became fashionable to make comparisons that¹⁴²

"... nothing is attempted beyond the substance of a fair English education - three R's and writing from dictation, with sometimes the elements of grammar and geography are the chief things taught."

A report of the Government Commission in 1884 found the educational state of the schools lamentably low where education and school training were sacrificed to industry and profit.

Balanced against the educational defects was the reduction in juvenile offences to the order of 40%,¹⁴³

in the 5 years ending September 29th, 1860, despite the establishment of a more effective police with better powers of detecting and convicting criminals, and the operation of the Criminal Justice Act. Under the operation of this act a considerable number of regular offences escaped sentence of penal servitude or transportation, by pleading guilty and submitting to a summary conviction followed by a short period of imprisonment, thus being left at liberty to appear again in the list of commitments for the same on the following year.

On the whole, official circles appear to take a more optimistic view, and even with conflicting evidence like Henry Mayhew's, the belief that education was a great factor in eliminating juvenile delinquency was generally regarded as one of the main reasons for the sharp rise from the 1830's onwards in public expenditure on such schools. The amount spent on reformatory schools in Britain in 1859 totalled £72,893 10s. 10d. in all,¹⁴⁴ rising to £112,540 in 1898. Expenditure on industrial schools rose from £58,701 in 1866 to £422,745 12s. 2d. in 1898.¹⁴⁵

By degrees the industrial schools took in a much younger age group. The Scottish trend 1860-1870 was to take in 37% under ten years,¹⁴⁶ well above the average for England in the same period. The official statistics collected by inspectors divulged more than just age,

they made a judgement upon the family situation of scholars. By far the largest number of children had one parent dead and the poverty of both living parents was not unlikely to result in a child's attending industrial school. Where there is a rising trend in admissions under 10 years in industrial schools, there is a falling away in that age range in reformatories. More of the incorrigibles aged 12-16 years seem to have entered by 1872 with a shorter number of convictions.¹⁴⁷

Improved education must have helped to raise the standard of the poor and equipped them to take advantage of the increasing opportunities for employment. Mary Carpenter said that employers were not only willing but eager to employ those who had undergone a steady and regular training in the reformatory schools.¹⁴⁸ In Scotland this is borne out by the statistics.¹⁴⁹ Almost double the English number of reformatory school children left for employment. An equal success rate was sustained by schools of industry in England and Scotland. What became of them once they left the rarified atmosphere of a school is more difficult to gauge. J. Greig and T. Harvey, the Argyll Commissioners, were sceptical;¹⁵⁰

"...it remains open to doubt how far the statements made concerning the conduct of young persons after they leave the reformatory are borne out by sufficient evidence. Even taking the statements as self-interpreting, we hesitate to accept them as true, in the sense in which they are meant to be understood."

Nevertheless, well over three quarters were assumed to be

'doing well' once employed, except the absconders for whom there was little sympathy from any quarter.¹⁵¹

If these figures are open to misinterpretation, the prison figures are even more so. Prisoners were said often to pretend to be completely illiterate for the sake of the softer life of the prison school. Good progress in learning gained one a good character too. The amount of instruction a child had received when brought into gaol was by no means to be estimated by the answers he gave. They were perfectly aware that they were the objects of great compassion and that ignorance was supposed to have been the cause of their position. Thus in a month or two they acquired a degree of intelligence and a capacity for reading and writing which seemed to show that the prison school far surpassed any other seminary for education.

One glance at Appendix Table 7(X) testifies to what looks like the overwhelming efficiency of education in the General Prison. On admission 15% of inmates could not read, dropping to 3% on liberation. Likewise, those who could not write became writers after finishing their sentence. Either the measure of proficiency was low, education was effective, or prisoners lied about their abilities.

Modern experience of a similar phenomenon with prisoners and soldiers suggests that in fact reading skills may be lost when they are not used. No doubt there were times when prisoners did claim to be more

ignorant than they really were, just as there were times when they made false claims to superior education. Moreover since many of them were incurable romancers, the statements of prisoners could not be relied upon.

g) Overview of Scottish Schools for the Reformation of the Criminal and Neglected

The streets of Victorian Glasgow were the playgrounds for the vast assemblages of children who lived from hand to mouth and who had the wits to outwit the law. Cleg Kelly, in the novel of the same name, was one such boy who lived in the slum tenements of the Pleasance in Victorian Edinburgh. Like Cleg it was the love of adventure, gambling and betting, that left countless ragged children to spend time in noise and riot, playing at chuck, or pitch and toss, and frequenting penny gaffs and the laughing gas saloon.

Mudlarks, toshers in sewers, and broomers, or those who swept pavements or cleaned brassplates of houses, steppers who brushed or washed steps for a penny a door, were the staple occupations of street children. When large towns were apt to pass bye-laws such as those against playing football in the streets, or street trading, the circle of delinquent behaviour was enlarged considerably. Vending, peddling or bootblacking were known as street trades owing to the popular fallacy that children who followed them were little 'merchants' (self-employed) and were therefore entitled to the dignity of separate classification. In these so called 'trades',

employment by others was usually the rule. Gradually the belief circulated that street work promoted retardation of school children¹⁵² and the ragged school stepped into the arena early on to encourage discipline among the undisciplined children of the street.

The main contribution of these schools to educational thought was the unqualified and emphatic insistence on free education for the destitute poor. In order to prove the existence of a class for whom free education with a religious bias was essential, the sponsors of ragged schools defined children in terms of their psychological characteristics; impatience of restraint, dislike of discipline, sedentary employment, irregular attendance - all rendering children unsuitable for ordinary pay schools. To their great credit the belief was emphatic that the faults of the parents should not be visited on the child, and they provided a scale of provision for those who otherwise would have gone without.

Another of their seminal influences was on social work for underprivileged children in the form of refuges, school meals, boys clubs, mothers' meetings, ragged churches, shoe black brigades, cripples' nurseries and holiday homes. The peculiar feature of self-help industrial brigades was embraced by the motto 'We help those who try to help themselves' and 'He who will not work neither shall he eat'. What was not in their favour was the overpowering reliance upon the amateur. The fear prevailed that government inspection would beget

certificated teachers who would expect something better than ragged schools, when the central philosophy was that the ragged school should be kept in the gutter. Before the 1861 Select Committee, school agent Hytche¹⁵³ admitted that not one fifth of paid teachers in London could pass the examination for workhouse teachers acknowledged to be the lowest of Privy Council standards.

Ragged school literature often alluded to the pretence that every pupil was childish and innocent, a little incongruous when the ragged school dealt with tough youngsters on the street. Charles Dickens, a supporter of the English model ragged school and one of their faithful pamphleteers, was infused with the same anti-intellectualism of New Testament Christianity - the child-like qualities of character commended by Jesus; blessed are the meek, suffer little children to come unto me, feed my lambs. Such simplicity of spirit made men like Shaftesbury fearful of compulsory education. On the 1870 Education Act he commented;¹⁵⁴

"The Godless non-bible system is at hand. The ragged schools with all their burning and fruitful love for the poor must perish under this all conquering march of intellectual power."

An astute commentator like Mayhew criticised many of these motives blaming philanthropists for always seeking to do too much and therefore failing repeatedly.¹⁵⁵ The poor were expected to become angels in an instant, the consequence was they were merely made hypocrites, while the far superior charity in proportion to their means of the working class themselves was forgotten.

The archetypal institution in Scotland was the industrial feeding school. With it Scotland avoided the taints of amateurism and in so doing it bridged the gulf between child and school with a loaf of bread. Glasgow became the pioneer in industrial education under parochial board finance and in the House of Refuge, under a local act, gave birth to the germ of the modern approved school. In fact, the extent to which the authorities transformed the industrial school into a delinquent agency was a measure of the influence of 'corrective' thought on legislation, and a belief that prisons were not the fit place for the detention of children. Where some industrial and ragged schools were combined, they were more expensive than purely industrial schools and the untoward effect of legislation in the sixties was the restriction of the available market by legislation and effective pruning.

All in all it added up to a radical change in penal policy, the first time a legislative enactment of Parliament recognised juvenile delinquency as a distinct social phenomenon. No longer were children 'little adults' since they lacked the full responsibility for their actions. The acceptance of Mary Carpenter's belief that children should not be dealt with as men was a seminal point in the evolution of the modern child.

A side effect of this substitution of industrial education for penal servitude was the monotony of training for the benefit of school revenue. In any case

the children were not there to be entertained, J. Rae, headmaster of the Institute Glasgow explained;¹⁵⁶

"But let us not be misunderstood. We do not advocate a high standard of education as being either desirable or necessary - it would not be fair to the honest and industrious that this should be so."

Some voices lamented their introduction in the first place;

"The working of industrial school would, I believe have shown the same results... if they had not been used as asylums for children who should naturally have been placed under the care of the parish authorities." 157

There was a common fear that the schools for the lower working class were looked upon by parents as a cheap and easy way of escaping the responsibility of educating their children. Even if they were, the contradiction between the practice and the need to clear the streets of unoccupied children was blatant;

"Nothing short of a law which shall compel a father to have his children fairly educated and which shall send the children to a school appropriate to their condition if the parents can or will not send them making the parents pay some trifling quota toward the expenses of their education; nothing but this I say can meet the evil." 158

The Scottish summary process of law by which the money of a married man could be arrested for the support of his wife and children, but could not be taken for the education of his children, was a criticism voiced as early as 1852.¹⁵⁹ Witnesses before the Select Committee on Criminal and destitute juveniles wanted the power that existed for the purpose of maintenance extended for education. A small cry in a whole wilderness of conflicting opinions.

In many ways Scottish schools were certainly having a decisive, albeit at times limited, success in giving food and work to beat crime. They saw their mission in combining home life and institutional care whenever possible. Schools efficiently run could have resounding success for the privileged few, but inevitably they laboured against overwhelming odds. There were just too many children bred as part of the vast industrial machine of Victorian capitalism. It was impossible to break the cycle of transmitted deprivation for a class by breaking it for the individual; more deepseated economic reorganisation was needed.

Henry Mayhew's criticism of ragged schools, although applicable primarily to London, highlighted a general malaise. He found that the ragged school child in fact became shrewder and all the more criminal for not being caught. A part of the blame can be apportioned to the Metropolitan schools themselves, for they were run with the added ingredient of altruism and complete disregard for the hard bitten nature of the street arab's life. In breaking their backs with incessant labour, Scottish schools overcame this disability at the cost of frequent desertions.

The lasting heritage of the Scottish school plan was the Aberdeen and Glasgow industrial schools, which proved once and for all the cheapness of industrial education when the labour of the children defrayed half

the cost of the food. They bred a new philosophy of school industry as a substitute for unemployment in the child labour market, and appealed most of all to poor law economy especially favourable to those who set little store upon an education of the mind.

In pre-school board terms, education was given reluctantly if given gratis. Industrial education therefore fitted well into the Victorian social perspective. Profit from sale measured the value of intellectual labour as it did of manual labour in the market place. It was additionally sustaining - there was no responsibility to maintain the worker's child physically. Its greatest contribution was towards the idea that labour itself was of educational value. The combination of economy and moral reform proved this.

Chapter VIII

Study 3 - Education of the Unemployed Child - The Pauper and Orphan

"Train up a child in the way he should go and
when he is old he will not depart from it." ¹

a) The Poor Law and Pauper Education

The third and final example of transmitted educational deprivation involves those working class children who were unluckiest of all. They bore the label and stigma of the pauper. A special type of industrial training was instituted for their relief.

The link between industrial education and the training of the paupers was bound up with the evolution in the 1840s of a rationalised poor law in Scotland. For the best part of three centuries prior to this, specific regulations had administered relief on behalf of pauper children.

The first enactments regarding the poor appeared in 1424 and 1457 when beggars were not allowed to beg between the ages of 14 and 70 years of age² unless they were unable to win a living by other ways. Later legislation mainly rested upon a statute passed in 1574 and established in 1579 for the punishment of stray and idle beggars.³ If any beggar's bairns, whether male or female, were above the age of five and under 14 years, they could be put into service or apprenticeship until the age of 24 years for males, up to 18 years for females,

by any persons so desiring their labour. A proclamation of 1692 was likewise concerned with putting children to work until later ages. Yet apprenticeship was never a distinguishing characteristic of the Scottish system, unlike England where similar acts made it a compulsory provision in the field of child care.⁴

With the sole administration for relief of aged and infirm poor in the hands of the kirk session, there was another act concerning the poor in 1617⁵ which stated that poor children were to be trained to labour. Although the act contained a pious provision about the need for educating and training such children, the emphasis was on servitude. Alongside this, was the practice of 'arling' or accepting money for the children of colliers. Children were, in fact, commonly arled into slavery this way.⁶ The condition that poor Oliver Twist found himself in two centuries later, could not have been uncommon then;⁷

"Mr Bumble grasped the undertaker by the arm and led him into the building. Mr Sowerberry was closeted with the board for five minutes; and it was arranged that Oliver should go to him that evening 'upon liking' - a phrase which means in the case of a parish apprentice that if the master finds, upon a short trial, that he can get enough work out of a boy without putting too much food into him, he shall have him for a term of years, to do what he liked with."

A new development of the seventeenth century was the appointment of instructors by the heritors, for teaching the poor child vagabonds and idlers worsted spinning, mixing wool and knitting stockings, in order

to promote Scottish manufacturers.⁸ Although occasionally a textile factory was set up, these plans for the most part did not materialise.

By 1800 funds for relief of the poor were raised by tax and stent, but the power of assessment was rarely used. Funds were usually contributions at parish churches with assessment being the exception rather than the rule. When a government enquiry into the administration and practical operation of the poor law was made in 1844, a tradition of voluntary charity was well ingrained into the Scottish population.

The characteristics of the Scottish system were first that no relief was given to the able-bodied, the 'merely' destitute; secondly that relief when given was not enough to support even the infirm and aged; and thirdly that all possible efforts were made to avoid the evil of assessments or in other words that in most places the funds were those that could be raised voluntarily mainly by church collections.⁹ The criterion of relief throughout the period was necessity combined with a deliberate intention to stop begging.

In England all destitute persons were entitled to relief. In Scotland the right was still only given to the 'necessitous' poor. The case for the able-bodied poor however, was one which was persistently and distinctly voiced.

Money was similarly a dictating factor in the relationship between parish schools and the popular

education of the poor. Landowners in the seventeenth century were prepared to be rated for a school and the parishes allocated to the schooling of poor children the highest priority. After the initial problem of creating a literate population from scratch, education was easier to provide than poor relief. The cost of a school was low and constant and benefitted all, whereas poor relief was incalculable and variable and its benefits were selective. In agreeing to pay for schools, landowners took on the lighter of the two burdens and gave themselves grounds for evading the other.

Where care for children was administered it was usually termed 'quartering' of the poor and older children more readily found homes than younger ones as there was more likelihood of them paying for their keep. The Scots always distrusted institutional care for rich or poor in favour of the family,¹⁰ so the taking in of foundlings (ill, abandoned children) into an institution was seen through the eyes of public opinion as encouragement of vice. Notwithstanding public attitudes children were still institutionalised and a 'hospital' or hospice meant a charitable institution for the education and maintenance of the young. By contrast in England the poor, not just the physically ill, were cared for irrespective of age.

Emphasis on the family did enter other fields of endeavour and became the germ of an efficient boarding-out

system of outdoor relief where children were relieved of the contaminating influence of the poorhouse in favour of nurses or foster parents. In fact, the Poor Law Inquiry Commission¹¹ mentioned only 13 poorhouses in Scotland. Very few poorhouses were ever established even after a legitimating act of 1672.¹² In England the situation was different and about 129 workhouses flourished in 1725 with separate accommodation for children who were taught trades.¹³ The 'less eligibility' principle of England's 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act enabled the able-bodied to be employed in industrious labour through this vast national network of buildings.

The prevailing climate of opinion in the 1840s was in favour of new measures for managing the poor, with a measure of social purgation. Reduction of pauperism was seen as an effective solution from which some, if not all of the pauperised poor, would emerge as self-sufficient members of the labouring classes, sustained in the independence of honest toil. As the cause of pauperism was commonly viewed as an hereditary disease, the education of the offspring could break the circle of deprivation, or at least temper the moral armoury of the soul.

Progressive pauper education found favour even with the protagonists of philosophic radicalism whose administrative tenets were so irresistible in the post

1830's era. The core of English views was contained in Samuel Whitbread's bill of 1807 devised to secure free elementary education for all pauper children. It failed to pass the House of Commons. Later the no less influential Thomas Mathus could approve education supported by public funds on the grounds that welfare of this kind might alleviate misery by teaching the young self-reliance.

North of the border the Commissioners of Enquiry reporting for Scotland in 1844 were alive to the ameliorating effect of much of the industrial training outlined in the previous chapter. Whilst advising against outdoor relief in towns to prevent unlawful combinations of workers, they were of the conviction that;¹⁴

"...educational measures on a far larger scale will be necessary before society can be purged of able bodied idlers."

"...one of the principal causes of pauperism in many parts of Scotland, particularly in the highlands and large towns, is to be found in the imperfect education of the children of a large portion of the working classes." ¹⁵

and the new Board of Supervision to co-ordinate poor relief vouched that "the duty of aliment involves the duty of education."¹⁶ This is not to imply that the obligation was not undertaken before the 1840s.

Charity or free education was the instrument of this progress. Glasgow had 15 charity and endowed schools beside numerous missionary ventures. Many teachers took in pupils gratis, or paid for them out of

kirk session funds, only now a large number of the most disreputable pauper class was to benefit by right. Some parishes abided by the enactment of 1803¹⁷ whereby a parochial schoolmaster had to 'teach such poor children of the parish as shall be recommended by the heritors and ministers at any parochial meeting', but teaching the poor had not been a profitable occupation because it could mean the master starved for lack of funds. Others, like the General Assembly of the Established Church, were more optimistic about eighteenth century developments, and before a Select Committee on the Poor Laws in 1818 they argued that few were without the means of education. The Commissioners of 1844 on the other hand, passed the duty to the parochial boards by recommending that in every parish a board of managers set aside from funds provided for relief of the poor the expenses for educating pauper children.

Free education was also a benefit bestowed by the Town's Hospital Glasgow, founded in 1733. Many children were 'relieved' by that institution and during the period 1790-1830 the numbers shown in the accounts as being on 'nursing wages' ranged between 105 and 1,072, the peak figure reached in 1820.¹⁸

In 1802 illegitimate or adopted children were first admitted to the Hospital on payment of £25 without any questions being asked of those who presented them. From then until July 1818 the numbers admitted under this

arrangement totalled 197; of these 113 died, 52 were 'at nursing', 12 returned to their friends, 9 were put out to apprenticeship or service, and 11 remained inside.¹⁹ At Michaelmas 1819 there were 355 adults and 58 children in the Town's Hospital as well as 212 children belonging to the Hospital but boarded in various parts of the country. The Hospital superintendent visited these boarded-out children annually and a special teacher for the indoor poor children provided them with divine worship and a minimum education in the three R's, piety and virtue.

Another scheme was launched in David Dale's New Lanark Mills in 1783 long the best of their kind, but even they depended largely on child labour, mainly orphans 'educated' for nearly two hours at the end of their day's work.

The experience of England in relation to the education of the pauper class was to be as different from Scotland as their treatment of the able-bodied poor. The kernel of England's developing organisation was the district school, the brainchild of James Kay-Shuttleworth and Edwin Chadwick.²⁰ The school was placed so as to be separate from the workhouse by inviting groups of Unions to aggregate a sufficient number of children to produce a school of optimum size. Little came of the whole scheme however, and even with the 1848 District Schools Act, compelling the formation of school districts, only six schools were in operation in 1855 and most of

these in the Metropolis.²¹

Kay-Shuttleworth's ideas crystallised with his investigation of child apprenticeship.²² What he advocated was the integration of all working class children in common schools in order to eradicate the specifically pauper character of poor law schools, which in themselves jeopardised children's future prospects of employment. The 1844 Poor Law Act in England did more than combine unions. It also abolished the system of compulsory apprenticeship and substituting an improved vocational education. Scotland was to avoid both of these issues in its boarding-out system, by passing the responsibility to foster parents.

Even with these developments, the district school movement was a failure. It met with hostility from elected guardians and was strangled by lack of central aid. Separate guardians made requests to have writing excluded on the grounds that it induced pauperism by making the workhouse more attractive. A feeling that pauper children should not be over-educated and the reluctance to forego the expense, are equally discernable in attempts to appoint paupers as teachers, or to fix very low salaries for these offices. In administrative terms, the numbers of children that were 'ins and outs' - the comers and goers of workhouse society - proved to be a perpetual cause of disruption in schools. A situation from which Scotland was not entirely free; "One boy", said one of the teachers, "eight years of age, has been

out and in 38 times."²³

After 1855 pauper education in England faded out of political currency. A General Order of 1870 legalised boarding-out outside as well as inside the Unions, and gradually the cornerstone of Scottish child care took root in England challenging the basic principles of the 1834 Poor Law.

The Poor Law Amendment Act for Scotland was passed on August 4th 1845.²⁴ Its aim was to improve the relief provision in each parish whilst controlling pauperism and vagrancy. Funds had been insufficient and subdivided after the Disruption and a hodge-podge of relief needed rationalisation.

A total of 13 poorhouses were provided in Scotland in which the standard was deplorably low. Glasgow had its own kirk session and hospital poor aided by licensed begging and private charity. To bring order to the system at the same time as avoiding the centralisation from Whitehall, a Board of Supervision was created in Edinburgh,²⁵ and every parish in Scotland had parochial boards responsible for their own poor and to preserve the local traditions and identity. Overall, its intention was to improve and render more efficient the operations of the poor law and make begging illegal by reinforcing old sixteenth century laws.

In pursuit of its aims, all persons who by reason of age or infirmity could not live without alms,²⁶ were

entitled to relief. In practice it created the 'permanent' poor who were placed upon the parish poor roll, and the 'occasional' poor who were granted temporary assistance from church funds and under Section 68 of the act entitled to some form of relief. After 1845 the able-bodied were still excluded from the right to claim for relief to discourage those not really requiring relief, and avoid the 'workhouse test' common in England. Although the criteria for relief was destitution and disability interpreted in its widest sense, loopholes gradually made themselves apparent. Poor parents might have their claim refused but younger children could claim they had become paupers or entitled poor in their own right. In addition, temporary help for the able-bodied could be given to the unemployed.²⁷ Obviously a man out of work becoming disabled through lack of life's necessities would be classed a destitute and disabled person. In the last resort he could appeal to private charity or appeal to the Sheriff to have his refusal reconsidered.

The terms 'temporary' caused confusion too, as there was no general agreement on the distinction between the permanent and the occasional poor; it all depended on the length of time during which the relief was given. Temporary recipients might re-apply several times a year, or in numerous parishes, thereby confusing the issue. Orphans and deserted children were also classed as

entitled poor or paupers in their own right, because they were destitute and disabled.

Despite the inconsistencies in legislation, many social and family predicaments entitled the working class to relief. There were widows with or without dependents; men disabled for work from sickness, infirmity or old age; deserted wives with dependents; orphans and deserted children; single women with illegitimate children; or lunatics. Two kinds of relief were available; 'outdoor relief' being the most common, given to the majority (after five years continuous residence) and amongst others those with undisputed settlement or vagrants whose settlement was in doubt. The poorhouse was classified as 'indoor relief' given to the minority for those needing medical aid - nursing mothers, lunatics, short termers (ins and outs), those too young to be boarded out, or those with disputed religion. A major benefit for inmates in the poorhouse took the form of freedom to come and go as they wished plus education for their children.

Education as relief in kind for children was similarly divided, and placed the parochial board in its role as educator and dispenser of remedial relief. The Argyll Commissioners found that in 1867, of the 3,980 children of pauper circumstance in Glasgow, 472 or 12% were educated in the poorhouse. A local priest taught Catholics separately, the rest received outdoor

relief of three kinds.²⁸ Three thousand children, the majority, resided with their parents or natural guardians and education was left in the parents' hands with the parochial authorities interfering only minimally. Charity schools, industrial schools, free lists or ordinary day schools, adventure schools and churches which paid school pence, dealt with their needs. If the boards paid, school fees were paid direct to the schoolmaster concerned or as a supplementary allowance to parents' aliment.

The second class of outdoor pauper children were those boarded mostly with guardians in Glasgow whose education was paid for by the parish authorities. They were placed for the most part in well selected families and in good common schools.²⁹ Inspectors of the poor chose the school, kept an exact record of a child's attendancem and paid the quarterly cost of their education including school books and other necessities, often with a supply of clothing made under Section 69 of the 1845 Act. Finally, there were the outdoor pauper children boarded in the country. These were most likely to be deserted orphans, or illegitimate children, but children living in qualid circumstances were included. In many cases boarding-out was made to dependents of paupers receiving indoor and outdoor relief.

Actual statistics of pauperism and poorhouse attendances are hard to define because of auditing problems.³⁰ Nevertheless, on 14th May 1860 the tables

reveal that 77,000 Scottish people were registered for poor relief and 37,000 dependents, with 3,000 entered upon the casual roll. From 1840 to 1890 the number of orphans and deserted children enrolled fluctuated around the 7,000 mark. Lanarkshire took between 25% to 33% of this total,³¹ most of course coming from Glasgow proper. According to a police return of 1841,³² one half of the 1,000 people relieved were above 50 years of age, over 1,600 children being dependent upon them, with 60% under 10 years of age.³³ There is evidence to suggest that in 76%-95% of cases, pauperism in children was due to the death or disablement of the father.³⁴

When we look at school attendances, we find that the number of poorhouse inmates at school fluctuated because of short-term stays. In most cases they attended the poorhouse school but some were not retained there, and were sent out to be educated.³⁵

We must now investigate a little closer the operation of outdoor relief in conjunction with the distinctly Scottish policy of boarding-out orphan children.

b) Glasgow City Parish - Pauperism & Industrial Education in Miniature

Glasgow's industrial ragged school in Rottenrow within the City Parish, was the outcome of two years deliberation on the most satisfactory provision for vagrant children. Its own history and that of the

City Parish Children's Committee was delicately interwoven with the reciprocal membership of men upon the parochial board committee, and the Board of Directors of the Industrial School Society. As aid previously granted was misapplied through the activities of parents, the medium of the industrial school allowed the parochial board the opportunity of bestowing the same amount of pecuniary aid for outdoor relief, with the added certainty of it being properly applied.

In reply to a remit from the board of 16th April 1847 the Glasgow Committee on Industrial Schools recommended a new type of school proposed for the youth that had previously been supported by the Towns Hospital. Initially none but those having a legal claim upon the parish (or were likely to) were to be admitted.

About the same time, the Board of Supervision had published their first report. No provision for the education of non paupers had been made in the 1845 Act, it was left entirely to the discretion of the parochial boards, but the Board of Supervision thought that children whose parents had no legal claim but encouraged their children to vice, should be cared for equally.³⁶ The parochial board vouched to provide from funds for the education and instruction in some branch of industry for children of paupers, but instruction of children not

entitled to relief would depend on voluntary contributions from the public.³⁷ A summary of the Board's proposals for the lacing together of parochial relief and industrial education was argued for by Bailie Mack in the first report.³⁸

Three classes of children and schools were presented. Firstly, boy and girl orphans under 14 years found prowling the streets came under the 69th section of the act as being themselves objects of parochial relief. Such children went to poorhouses if industrial education was provided, or more appropriately to an industrial school. Secondly, children who had parents too poor to educate them to a life other than begging (suitable applicants under Section 69), became the intended recipients of clothing and education at a school. Finally there were destitute children convicted of theft, whose condition was equal to that required by the act and needed penal training in an industrial school. Education for them was equivalent to punishment, with payment for these dubious benefits coming from the public purse. Because inhabitants of cities could not be legally assessed for maintaining children having no legal claim, aid was usually given in the interim whilst the appropriate parish was ascertained. Economy in such matters was seen to be the best means of judging a school for industrial education until their legality was assured.

In conformity with their beliefs and at a meeting of

magistrates, parochial board officials, and representatives of the Industrial School Society, a sum of £500 was voted by the city board to the industrial schools, it being unanimously agreed that the police should clear the streets of vagrants and carry them to the school. All other Glasgow boards - Barony, Gorbals and Govan likewise held themselves responsible to the Industrial School Society for maintenance of vagrant children.

Unfortunately, it was to be the last time the parochial authority broached the subject of education. A comment appeared in the appendix to the 13th report of the Board of Supervision by H. Harrison Briscoe, General Superintendent of the poor, to the effect that;³⁹

"Boards show every disposition to pay for education but seldom evince much interest in the subject ... I cannot say I was able to get much information relating to education."

It would be an underestimation of the efficiency and determination of local boards, especially Glasgow City, if the Board of Supervision's comment were wholly true. What actually happened then after the passing of the act?

After the passing of the 1845 Act, Glasgow City Parish was divided into five districts or wards, with one inspector and four assistants. Five parochial board members were assigned to each ward and several committees for relief, sanitation, inspectorate and the poorhouse came into existence. It was not until 1852 however, that a children's committee was officially

established.⁴⁰ From the Minutes of the Parochial Board and Children's Committee a proper co-ordination of policy between the poorhouse, industrial school and boarded-out children was little in evidence until about 1858. Up until then, allowances were made to various school societies throughout the city for an annual grant for children with claims upon the parish,⁴¹ and several deputations were made by the Industrial School Society to the parochial board to place more children dependent upon the parish in its institution.⁴²

An analysis of children receiving parochial aid in 1854 made by a children's superintendent claimed that of a total of 2,259 children, 673 were on the nursing roll, 81 were in the poorhouse, 22 lived with parents and attended city charity schools, and 258 who ought to have received education were unaccounted for.⁴³ One embarrassment was the casual poor, who moved from parish to parish, making the education of their children very difficult to administer or account for.

When a pamphlet by Norman McLeod, minister of the Barony Church, was published on industrial training in the wake of the government's reports on criminal and destitute children, the climate of opinion changed favourably.⁴⁴ It condemned the neglect of education in the City Parish for pauper children and recommended that the parochial board consider farm labour and industrial training. In agreement with Kay-Shuttleworth's

observations⁴⁵ McLeod recommended rewards for moral distinction rather than intellectual precocity. Rate-payers he implied might be relieved of their burden since children were discouraged from living above the level of the household of the self-supported labourer.

In line with changes in public opinion by 1854 the Reformatories and Industrial Schools Act⁴⁶ made it possible to recommend part of the poorhouse school to be converted into a reformatory. On the 7th April 1857 Adam Lothian, a teacher, was appointed to the school at a salary of £80 per annum with accommodation provided. Subsequently the industrial school at Rottenrow was licensed as a reformatory with children detained at night as well as during the day.

Indoor relief in the poorhouse in the form of education was at once basic and only transitory and many of its charges were unfit for boarding-out because of ill health. Essentially the poorhouse was a landing stage for 'ins and outs' or 'revolvers'. When the day came for sending a child to school the mother would discharge herself and therefore prevent the child being educated. In one day alone an average of 18 people would be admitted and perhaps 20 discharged as discharging was on a purely voluntary basis.⁴⁷ Many persons came from the night asylum for merely short stays, while deserted wives and children, or mothers and their illegitimate offspring stayed barely a week,⁴⁸

and those sent by the police officer under the Reformatory School Act were usually deserted or with parents in prison.

In view of the turnover, the poorhouse school teachers found themselves with a completely different set of children at the end of the year.⁴⁹ The problem was that nothing was received from the public purse for poorhouse schools in Scotland, although central supervision was exercised, while England was lucky enough to receive £36,500 and Ireland £8,328 for their maintenance.⁵⁰ Inevitably a lack of funds resulted in a major eclipse in school life. For example in 1864 a Glasgow epidemic meant the classrooms had to be temporarily converted into fever wards.

Undeterred by setbacks a gradual and more systematic treatment of those on the outdoor education roll forged links between the reformatory and ancillary institutes. The parochial board had always sent appropriate cases to the blind deaf and dumb asylum for a specialised education, but those sent specifically to the reformatory loomed large in the accounts.⁵¹ The reason was that they had been subject to certain liabilities, from which guardians in England were exempt, in respect of the maintenance in industrial schools of children who were chargeable at the date of their committal, or within three months previously. The Glasgow schools at Rottenrow took in various cases of children who resided with their

parents or natural guardians or those boarded with strangers in the city. The children were not so poor as to have their education interrupted by work but their education was interrupted through the neglect of parents or death in the family.⁵²

When both parents died the board was reluctant to provide relief if there were relatives living, so often industrial school children lodged with friends. Over 50% of reformatory boys stayed four or five years, only one third of them had parents still living, most had either both parents dead or in a majority of cases the father was dead or deserted. When the father was absent it became increasingly difficult to control the boy and he was highly likely to find himself at the police office or magistrates court. More often than not the fathers were unskilled.

Not all fathers of necessity were engaged in menial occupations, some were from the labour aristocracy or the white collar class viz. schoolmasters and clerks. In this case the children were the products of parental neglect or illegitimacy. Few if any, made material progress, most went on afterwards to become apprentices. One orphan boy, James Burgess admitted on December 3rd 1855, aged 11, was found wandering and illiterate. After four years at the school he had advanced sufficiently to be sent to the normal seminary. But such cases were unusual.

Those in the industrial school stayed for only short periods and many absconded. Probably they would be taken away by the parents when they were able to support them, or they went to work, or fell ill requiring admittance into the poorhouse. The board paid 1/6d a week for every child at the school who had a claim upon the parish, and an allowance of 1/- to widows was withdrawn if the child failed to attend.

Generally the boy resided with a parent or friends returning home at night. Thus the more complete surveillance of children in the school was favoured by the authorities for reasons of economy. As the number of police cases grew, lodging on the premises became the rule.⁵³ Recommendations for detention at school were often the work of ministers, elders, missionaries or inspectors. Alexander McDonald aged seven years, who lived with his grandmother, was admitted on February 11th 1855 at the recommendation of a bailie who had found the boy singing ballads in the street. Within a short time he had deserted and resumed this occupation, as the streets often had added attractions to those with initiative. If looked at realistically, on being given the opportunity to educate their children at parochial expense, parents were likely to invest in a cheap adventure school, or surreptitiously send the child to work.⁵⁴

c) The Boarding-Out of Paupers

The jewel of the Glasgow city parochial education system and pride of place, went to the boarding-out of pauper charges. Considering that Scotland received nothing from the Exchequer for the education of pauper children, the scheme was to operate remarkably well.

Stated simply the scheme meant that orphan or destitute children were sent to respectable working class tradesmen or single women in suburban or country districts where in exchange for an aliment, they were educated and looked after.⁵⁵ A special officer was appointed as an assistant inspector whose sole duty consisted of looking after the children. He ascertained the character of persons applying for children to nurse, examined their houses, supplied the child with clothes, visited them half-quarterly to check and pay the medical officer's bills and to pay the nurses, the school fees and books.

The immediate advantage was that boarded-out children acquired a more robust constitution and apparently greater mental activity, than children reared in the poorhouse. Both these points struck at the cycle of recurrent pauperism and prevented children becoming claimants in later years. The child's connection with the poorhouse was thus severed. The payment to nurses for their charge was usually 2/6d per week, on top of which the parish also supplied clothing, school fees,

medical attendance and medical extras. Three shillings was paid for children under three, and 5/- for children at the breast.⁵⁶ The children usually ceased to be chargeable at about 13 years or 14 years of age, the precise age depending upon their physical and mental capabilities. Their earnings were occasionally supplemented, as they required more food when commencing labour and at that period their wages were not sufficient to support them. When the onus for getting jobs was placed upon the nurses payment ceased after they received 5/- per week from work, although boys who were apprenticed remained chargeable until 16 years of age. In many cases a bible, new clothes, and a trunk were given to each child when it was able to fend for itself.

The first thorough report upon the system was made in 1875;⁵⁷

"... the Inspectors of poor throughout Scotland are nearly unanimously of the opinion that the boarding-out system has been attended with a remarkable measure of success"

Of 4,512 boarded-out, 4,017 or 89% were orphans or deserted, only 11% were not, 83% were at schools, the others presumably were too young.⁵⁸ Some three quarters of all orphans and deserted children from mostly urban parishes in Scotland were boarded-out in this way.⁵⁹ Those children boarded-out but not orphans were classified as separated.⁶⁰ The most common case was that in which the surviving parent, generally the mother, was held unfit through mental or physical weakness or

from drunkenness, to have custody of her children.

While there was no positive authority to enforce boarding-out, it was done at the goodwill of the parochial boards. Similarly, there was no legal authority for separating a parent from a child unless a definite offence had been committed.⁶¹ In both cases the parishes acted as pioneers and with a degree of caution. Parents could render the scheme ineffectual by stepping in and removing children from the nurses, as the authorities had no power to refuse to give up a child claimed by its father or mother.

At first the Board of Supervision was unsure whether the results obtained from boarding-out were to be preferred to the best results arrived at in a well regulated institution. It was initially feared that both the amount of literacy instructed and the neglect was more if boarding-out than if boarded in an institute.⁶² In most cases the fears about the child had been groundless, and gradually a tighter net was drawn around the operations to prevent evasion. Few difficulties presented themselves except finding adequate accommodation for Catholic children who were at the receiving end of the religious discrimination of the time.

By 1865 Glasgow city had 42 locations and 183 nurses. All children were well clothed, some had seaside residences and there was no difficulty in finding work.⁶³ A favourite resort was boarding-out in crofter's families

in the Isle of Arran. Among those residing with relatives in towns, 22% were comfortable working class families, 37% families where they could make an addition to income and 4% low income receivers.⁶⁴

There was however, a less attractive side to the whole affair. Children's labour provided a useful income. In accordance with the belief that they could benefit from working on the farm, child labour was easily exploited, especially when the crofters needed extra income to pay off high rents. Some nurses plied a doubtful trade in boarding too many children, collecting the aliment whilst exploiting the unpaid labour of the young in exchange for the minimum education possible.⁶⁵ A case in point was John Graham nine years of age, under the nursing care of Alexander Stewart, a weaver of Kirkintilloch. Stewart set the boy on the loom instead of apprenticing him in the weaving trade,⁶⁶ for which he received a weekly aliment of 3/- plus the produce of his labour.

Even when arrangements were strictly controlled much could go undetected as shorter hours of labour usually meant an increased intensity of work. Sometimes it was not a case of hard labour, but of poor conditions. Robert Fairly gave evidence to an Englishman from the local Government Board, a Mr. J.J. Henley, to the effect that;⁶⁷

"We did not get our meat (food) well or our beds. We laid in straw; no sheets; no pillow, but a pair of blankets. Three boys slept there. We did not get enough food at any meal; we did not complain. The woman deceived the visiting officer; she showed other things. We never complained to the Inspector; the woman dared us; we were afraid. She showed the visiting officer the lodger's beds instead of ours. The lodgers were masons building a church."

Henley's status and position meant that his views carried little authority, but incidents like this did make him recommend a careful selection of nurses, liberal payments and supervision by paid officers, to ensure the success of the system.

The supporters of boarding-out were not deterred. It was one means by which paupers could be absorbed into the mass of the population while providing an antidote to crime. In raising the social position of children;

"... there is no attempt to place them in a better position than the families of the respectable labouring classes." 68

Some doubts were raised about the practice of throwing children onto the parish in order to receive them back with payment, but no evidence was available.

Commissioners Greig and Harvey remarked favourably on regular attendance at the village school since this was the most obvious outward sign of success.⁶⁹ Even the position of school dux was not out of the reach of pauper lads, as records were kept of four boys who gathered 21 prize volumes between them and two medals.⁷⁰ All of Glasgow's charges seemed to be doing remarkably well by

1872 and a justified return was made for the 80% of total educational expenditure invested by the City Parish on behalf of these children.⁷¹

When the Education (Scotland) Act was passed in 1872 the parochial board had a new job, to impose and levy the school rate for the school board along with the assessment for relief of the poor, and under the 69th Section of the 1876 Act, it was not officially made responsible for paying school fees for all children whose parents felt they were unable to pay the school fees for that child. Under these new conditions parents could apply for help from the parochial board without themselves becoming paupers.

d) Charity Schools and Schools for Orphans - Scotland's Special Cases

Before the systematic boarding-out of pauper casualties became the rule, and for a considerable time afterwards, charity education had been a weapon in the armoury of Glasgow's fight against poverty and ignorance. There were fifteen charity schools in the 1860's coping with a total of 2,668 children,⁷² many being started by private organisations for sectarian purposes alone. One of these, the Highland Society used its funds to educate and put out to trade boys born in the highlands or those who were descendants of highlanders.

Markedly, the tendency was for schools like this to raise their educational potential and supply only the wants

of children from the respectable working class. Wilson's Free School, founded in 1780 by a London merchant, exclusively rejected those 'having the benefit of the towns hospital or any parochial or session charity'. MacLachlan's, Gardner's and Miller's likewise preferred 'children of respectable people'. Only places like Stirling Street Poor School lived up to their name. The Buchanan Institute one of the richest and largest opened in 1859, after a bequest of £3,000 to the city, for the purpose of 'carrying into active operation an institution for the maintenance and instruction of destitute children'. The children were boarded but were not lodged and excellent facilities were provided for those who were not hospital cases.

Others like Anderston Charity School were less fortunate, being carbon copies of the mission schools run by churches in poor areas. Characterised by irregular attendance and poor accommodation, they went to greater lengths to direct their education 'at the gutter',⁷³ with the sort of gratis education more specifically found in ragged schools.

A special type of institution for orphans known as a 'hospital' has a separate place in the history of charity education. While not catering specifically for the lowest sections of the population, and being adopted mainly in the East of Scotland, it affected

greatly the Scottish attitude to charity and the poor.

The word 'hospital' was applied to an institution for the maintenance, clothing and education of orphan and destitute children and was introduced from England in 1624 by George Heriot.⁷⁴ All other Scottish hospitals owe their origin to the desire to imitate the work of Heriot and so important had they become in Scottish educational history that a Commission of 1875 published the results of an enquiry into their organisation.⁷⁵

One of the most notable, Hutcheson's Hospital in Glasgow, was founded by two brothers in 1639 and applied specifically to the sons or grandsons of burgesses. The title of burgess by the nineteenth century had come to mean something quite different from its original meaning, but generally foundationers were drawn from artisans, tradesmen or the better off labouring class. Because Heriot's schools in Edinburgh are the best examples of education of this sort an outline story of their demise will add to our understanding of public attitudes at the time.

In 1835 Heriot's bequest still left a surplus of £3,000 a year at the same time as there was a decreasing number of burgesses in the town. A plan for a complete system of free elementary education in every parish was instigated with enough free education for all poor children. In 1836 an act of Parliament⁷⁶ obtained

authorisation for the governors of the Hospital to establish free outdoor schools for the poorer classes of the city. The first school opened in October 1838, and by 1854 ten schools were in operation, 3 infant for 606 pupils and seven juvenile elementary for 2,217 scholars,⁷⁷ the total on the roll amounted to 5,000 day scholars and 1,000 at night. Besides providing for orphan children of burgesses, they catered for Edinburgh's Protestant poor with such success that by 1875 the income had increased to £20,200, and this led the governors to increase the number of free schools to absorb the surplus.

So favourable was the scheme for the education of poor children that in 1870 a book entitled Recess Studies appeared condemning the expenditure on outdoor schools as so much money thrown in the streets, and claiming the money on behalf of the University.⁷⁸ Two years later the elementary education act was passed creating further grounds for attack, especially as a system of secondary schools was not well developed in Scotland. S.S. Laurie, one of the leaders in the attack against education for the poor wanted to put an end to the monastic character of hospitals with an element of competition introduced for admission,⁷⁹ in short, converting them into day schools for elementary and secondary education at a cost, and with a reduced number

of charity foundationers. Arguing that hospitals paralysed children and pauperised parents a case was made for middle class control. Furthermore, Laurie maintained that charities diminished the self-respect of recipients and created in the community the very class they helped.

The Commission was in effect blaming poverty on charity not unemployment, and attempting to withhold the obligation of making the community responsible for the education of all children. The strength of such arguments lay in the new set of circumstances created by the elementary education act which removed impediments to a decent elementary education.

Mr. J.H.D. Meiklejohn one of the witnesses before the Royal Commission of 1875 concluded;⁸⁰

"I am compelled to the conclusion that free schools when existing side by side with paying schools are a permanent source of demoralisation to parents of the middle and lower middle classes."

S.S. Laurie was more vindictive, accusing orphan schools of instigating the demoralising influence of charitable doles and weakening the feeling of self-dependence that lay at the basis of energy and industry.⁸¹ The whole report reflected the philosophy of the Charity Organisation Society with its criticism of indiscriminate almsgiving.⁸² Characteristically Fettes, the famous Edinburgh private school, was given a reprieve on the dubious grounds that it desired to escape the changes to which the hospital system was liable.

After the new Royal Commission on Endowed Institutes reported in 1884 a legislative act was introduced in due course to herald the demise of privileged education for the working class. The lesson to be drawn from the saga was that privileges freely given were too good for the working class poor. The more unfortunate members of the poor had to be satisfied with the multiplication of a number of voluntary homes and orphanages.

No review of charitable education would be complete without a very brief excursion to Quarrier's homes for working boys.

In the latter decades of the nineteenth century many dispossessed children boarded-out actually went to other institutions of one sort or another. These found their birth after the influx of Catholic paupers escaping from the Irish famine in 1848. Unable to be boarded-out because of sub-standard living conditions, they had to go elsewhere. Like the Catholics children who ceased to be educated and ceased to be chargeable at 14 years were in a similar situation. They were often pushed out of their sheltered environment with little or no family support. Homes for working boys like those of William Quarrier helped to fill the gaps.

William Quarrier was born on September 29th 1829 in Greenock.⁸³ After spending his boyhood in the Gorbals

and moving frequently between tenements in the High Street and Saltmarket, he opened his first shoeshop in the suburb of Anderston. Gradually his mind turned to child rescue as it became an obvious means of channelling the evangelical enthusiasm that accompanied his avid interest in the church. So dedicated was he, that from the 1860's onwards there blossomed a number of projects that bore his name.

Quarrier originally worked among older lads in Glasgow forming them into recognised brigades with uniforms. The idea that the boys should earn their living by doing jobs was implicit in names like the 'Glasgow Shoe-Black Brigade' or 'The Parcel Brigade'. In time his rescue operations located younger children who were accommodated in his night refuges and orphan homes. The crowning glory of Quarrier's work which might supply a fitting epitaph to this chapter were the country homes in Renfrewshire at the Bridge of Weir.

Like Barnardo's Homes established in 1866 before the statutory provision against cruelty to children,⁸⁴ these edifices of humanity emphasised tidiness, neatness, cleanliness and christian behaviour, to counter the hardships of 'parental sin' that contributed more than its fair share to the transmitted educational deprivation of the age.

Chapter IX

Literacy and the Relationship between Formal and Informal Education

Part 1 - Literacy and Formal Education

a) The Measurement of Literacy

After progressing this far in our social analysis of working class education, we are able to isolate several important strands of information;

- 1) Industrialisation did irreparable damage to Scottish education.
- 2) Religious and governmental agencies were powerless to handle the swollen industrial population.
- 3) Although Sunday Schools healed the breach, the life cycle of ignorance was thrust upon two classes of children the employed and the unoccupied.

Up to this point formal education has been specifically defined in terms of the working class child and the working class youth. A link must now be made with adulthood. Literacy, the best measure of the impact of education, will help us define the effects of education upon the population as a whole.

The relation between educational agencies and the literate and semi-literate population is, in many **senses**, complicated. Did the literacy of a young adult measure length of school life or did his/her literacy advance with

age, or did a statutory school leaving age successfully transfer the responsibility for literacy from the private to the public domain? If the working class could read was it because of the schools? How much schooling was necessary before a child was able to write?

To find an answer at this stage would be to prejudice the issue. We may only hazard the guess that any serious gap between reading and writing implies that a decline in the duration and breadth of education as well as in numbers educated, was a prominent legacy of industrialisation. The first question we must answer is: what level of literacy existed among the Scottish population during the period studied; was it high or lower than usually assumed? From here we may gain some insight into the effectiveness of institutional arrangements as agents of cultural transmission to all sections of society.

The success of Lord Northcliffe's halfpenny Daily Mail in 1896, and the Dundee based commercial organisation of D.C. Thomson, substituted for the old kind of commercial class supported newspaper a new one based upon a new literary public. Northcliffe claimed that the Mail's popularity was due to increased literacy, part of the new public education system. A success story of this kind is only partially true.

From 1840 onwards the most widely selling newspaper was not the Times, but one or other of the cheap penny Sunday papers circulating throughout Britain. Literacy was not a transforming factor as Northcliffe maintained, even supposing that the 1872 Act was the basis of popular literacy, which it was not. Raymond Williams, in his book The Long Revolution states categorically;¹

"There were enough literate adults in Britain in 1850 to buy more than the total copies of the Daily Mirror now sold each day."

The literacy question was not confined to businessmen alone, nineteenth century reformers emphasised the poor state of schools and in so doing obscured the question of actual literacy. In fact an over sophisticated conception of literacy confused ignorance with illiteracy - it mistook the lack of the habit of reading for the lack of ability to read. Also, the tests used by educational reformers were supported on the grounds that anyone who had not advanced so far as to learn to write, could not possibly know how to read sufficiently well to derive benefit from it. The usual test for comprehension was reading and explaining passages of the Bible - a severe test for children, even today, and a criterion we can hardly accept. If they did not read Shakespeare, Homer or Horace they could read street literature, descendants of eighteenth century chapbooks and handbills, written in simple language and directed exclusively at the lower classes.

Literacy in respectable circles came to be expressed by this equation - low literacy equals never reading what was worth reading, only reading what was harmful or radical. Yet an increasing correlation existed between literacy and radicalism, the radicalism which was a by-product of the unstamped press. Whereas widespread literacy in the eighteenth century could co-exist with relative economic backwardness without generating tensions and frustrations, the rapid industrial and social changes complimentary to the industrial revolution, aggravated an already deteriorating situation. The eighteenth century literate farm labourer fared no better than his illiterate companions. Incentives to attend charity or Sunday Schools were slight as there were few visible benefits. The factory system with its harsh discipline and small personal rewards altered expectations drastically - the only palliative the people had for the deteriorating circumstances, was the Radical Society, where reading was encouraged, or the psychic satisfaction that the cheap popular press invoked.

With these factors in mind, we must restate our definition of literacy. The ability to read simple prose not the ability to write is the criterion of literacy. Sporadic school attendance, the rule rather than the exception among the lower classes, enabled reading not writing, as many Sunday Schools did not

teach writing on doctrinaire grounds. Besides, the poor seldom had occasion to write as pens and paper were expensive.

The English Newcastle Commission of 1861 found that writing was taught in 78.1% of public day schools and 43.2% of private day schools, while nearly all taught reading. A similar return for Scotland² in 1834, for parochial and non-parochial schools, cites 29,487 children under five taught to read, 323,154 5 to 15 years, with only 172,377 taught to write. Glasgow City had 782 under five's reading, 15,090 5 to 15 year olds and 6,050 or 40% of writers to readers.

In many ways the concept of functional literacy is an appropriate analytical tool. Simply defined it means the command of reading skills that permit people to go about their daily activities successfully, having a comprehension of the usual printed expressions and messages.³ So called 'proper literacy' - being able to bring knowledge to bear upon what passes before you, rather than just the ability to read - is another matter. Functional literacy goes a long way to explain reading differences between occupations as we shall see later. A tradition of literate friends reading aloud, throwing a bridge across any supposed division between the exclusively literate and illiterate groups within society, must have been common, but because historical evidence of bridging of this kind is necessarily

anecdotal, it is difficult to say with confidence how often it occurred.⁴

Appendix Table 9(I) is a graph of the estimated adult male literacy in France, Scotland, England and Wales 1600-1900. Scotland's position is impressively high with a literacy rate of approximately 89% in 1850, compared with England and France of 68.5% and 65% respectively. In 1700 literacy in Scotland stood well below that of England at 46%, but rose to 75% in 1750, well in front of England with only 52%. From there on, it rose steadily maintaining this lead until 1800, when in the first half of the nineteenth century, literacy rose only 1% in Scotland and approximately 3½% in England. This falling-off or possible drop in growth⁵ was probably accounted for by structural changes in the rural way of life.

A decline in literacy was not likely to impede any upsurge of economic growth because the nature of the industrialisation was such as to make very low demands on the educational system in terms of literacy. An argument can be made for a rapid decline in literacy from 1800 to at least 1840 from observations referred to in previous chapters on education and the employed child. Social changes arising from early industrialisation, militated strongly against full-time education and were crucial as regards the change in the work habits of children, as they were in the rise in population.

Day schooling was either foregone or confined to an even younger age, when its content was likely to be less serious and its effects much less permanent.

Industrialisation gave rise to more general modes of life inimical to the schooling of children. The migratory habits of families tramping to factories or plying on the canals denied their children a fixed abode and regular uninterrupted school attendance. The mysterious countervailing force of the Sunday School often looked upon as a curious cultural and educational sideshow, as I have shown elsewhere, was the most viable substitute in education, but its force did not really make itself apparent until the late 1830s.

The probable increase in literacy may have helped the onset of industrialisation but once the process began, levels deteriorated. One finds the interesting situation of an emerging economy creating a whole range of new occupations which required even less literacy and education than the old ones. To focus on a particular example, there is no doubt whatever that powerloom weavers possessed lower literacy than the handloom weavers they replaced. A declining demand on skill as a result of the introduction of the powerloom in Glasgow was accompanied by the onset of Irish immigration. Traditional communities of educated working men like those in Paisley, and Dunfermline declined also.⁶ Many processes in factories required knack or know-how, rather than literature based learning.

Thus the cotton industry was able to develop with a predominantly sub-literate labour force. A social investment education to civilise and socialise the labour force was preferable to a productive investment education. In fact literate workers in Scotland emerged irrespective of the demands of industry.

Furthermore there was little close relation between education and the demands of the economy reflected in the quantity of education received and the price of labour. A mechanic was far more literate than an engineer, and yet an engineer was paid considerably more than a mechanic.⁷ New occupations were sub-literate and certainly less literate than most pre-existing craft occupations and were not plentiful enough to absorb all literate workers, at least until the creation of a vast clerk class sent sons of skilled workers into the ranks of the lower middle classes. Again, before 1840 the motive behind education was religion, not the economy, thus stabilising the sub-literate society..

Already the argument is becoming confused. Decline or no decline before 1840, available data before that time is scanty and inconclusive. Avalanches of statistics in the 1840s were usually the outpourings of moral reformers, eager to prove the population was sunk in misery, or chiefly selected to prove one particular point. Some more objective treatment of the

data needs to be made to arrive at reasonable conclusions.

In all literacy statistics, several parameters stand out above all others, these are age, sex, occupation and residence. Bearing in mind these factors we will look at overall statistics of the country, reflecting primarily sex composition; specific areas, reflecting the residence qualification; and finally occupation to see whether there were differential economic demands. Each method will advance in accuracy, and may answer the question as to whether literacy was as high as Appendix Table 9(I) assumes; whether it declined after 1800; and whether some more important factors were at work than the school in encouraging reading skills.

b) Literacy by Nation and Locality

Traditional interpretations of literacy have relied exclusively upon marriage registers, signed with a cross or a signature by each party in the contract. Data relating to Scotland was published in Parliamentary Papers for the years 1855 onwards⁸ and used by contemporary authorities to judge the elementary education of the masses. A graph of the results for England and Scotland appears in the Appendix Table 9(II).

In line with the belief in the superiority of Scottish education, the statistics of those men and women who signed their own name is impressively high.

By 1860 89% of males and 78% of females were able to do so, compared with only 74% and 63% respectively in England. The effectiveness of the national parochial school system was vindicated by these results. In counties like Kinross in 1860 the signing rate is as high as 100% for men. The more industrialised regions of Lanark and Renfrew disclosed only an 86% rate. The results were distinctively regional, as Ross and Cromarty could muster a rate of only 62% for men and 45% for women.

One look at the trend over a period of years exhibits the marked upward growth of literacy for both sexes from 1850 onwards in England, with a relatively stagnant growth rate in Scotland between 1855 and 1872. In contrast England was to start the century with a relatively backward programme of popular education, but it did manage to keep abreast of the rising population until the end of the century. Scotland on the other hand, complacent with initial successes, failed to achieve a 'take off' by 1850 and only managed partially to counter the needs of a growing populace, until by 1880 it called forth its reserves under government sponsorship. Voluntary school provision was therefore completely unsuitable to Scottish conditions, and was the case that proved the rule, that laissez-faire in education was both partial and unreliable.

Moreover, voluntarism in England was possibly more viable because the English were not hampered by an outdated infrastructure of education, and not attached to worn notions of educational egalitarianism. Social divisions in Scottish education were well ingrained by 1840 and were impossible to ameliorate without statutory intervention. A glance at Appendix Table 9(III) for comparisons between Edinburgh and Glasgow, shows quite distinctly how little changed were the differences in literacy well on into the 1880's.

Comments by the Registrar General in annual reports blame the immigrant Irish in the west for failures in the education system. Certainly the Catholic Church contributed at least half of the total mark signatures displayed in a return in 1869,⁹ as it must have done from very early in the century. The Deputy Clerk of Peace for Dumfriesshire, speaking to the Select Committee on Railway Labourers in 1846 on the moral condition of men employed on the Caledonian line, stated that in the village of Lockerbie where 600 men were lodged the evening school was attended almost exclusively by Irish, for the Scots were already able to read and write.¹⁰ It would be fortuitous however, to blame the Catholics for an Inverness Society return of 1826 where only 55% of the population could read and one in four families were totally illiterate.

The evidence upon which the Registrar's returns were made is open to criticism. Because marriages in Scotland were by economic necessity a later event than in England, and as the art of reading and writing had possibly deteriorated, the statistics are necessarily under-estimates. The solemnity of the occasion was such that the more timid made marks instead of signatures. Refusal to sign a marriage register was perhaps a way to avoid embarrassing an illiterate partner or from fear of doing it crudely. It is therefore possible that 10 to 25% of people using marks might have been literate. Some occupations by tradition alone required a cross in place of a signature on official payslips. Such practices would pass over into other activities.

The strongest criticism in favour of the returns being overestimates is in answer to the question; when does a person learn to write? Writing itself is no measure of literacy, it being quite possible that signing the name was the sole literary ability acquired by the people, and the first request of any child demanding to see his or her imprint on paper. Only an investigation of signatures made with firm or shaky hands could establish whether the act was a routine gesture.

Which sections of society were officially married anyway?

The full church ceremony was expensive and required the proclamation of banns, with all the attendant fees and festivities. This was only possible for the wealthier sections of the people. A certificate of marriage was the required legal condition of the contract and one of the cheapest means to avoid church attendance and register signing. Also common law marriage among unskilled workers was probably the rule. A pauper woman would most certainly bear several names with no religious sanction for any of them, having been married under common law several times.

With Glasgow strongly representative in working class terms and under representative in the marriage statistics compared with Edinburgh, some greater insight into locality is called for.

Although one is much less well served by statistics on Scotland, a variety of surveys of localities were made during the 1830s and 1840s displaying enormous variations between parishes. In the Dick Bequest counties of Aberdeen, Banff and Moray,¹¹ of 93 parishes, 61 contained no individual above six unable to read, while 32 contained 1,433 persons unable to read, 851 of them being above twenty. The deficiency was accounted for largely by a remote and scattered population and the number was small enough, in any event much smaller, than might be expected from the proportion one eleventh

of persons attending schools. These assessments seem to be borne out by gratuitous comments sprinkled through rural parish returns in the New Statistical Account.

For the manufacturing districts one can derive some fairly definite conclusions from the surveys, as the districts cut across occupational lines and geographical divisions. Large and small samplings, surveys whose sponsors disclaimed any degree of accuracy, surveys whose sponsors believed in their accuracy, estimates from well informed observers, odd comments by workmen themselves, all seem to hover about figures ranging from two thirds to three quarters literate for the working class, in wide groups or specific occupations. Where assessments were based largely on interviews without tests, people were tempted to conceal their inabilities or to overstate the degree of their skill - a factor perhaps even more likely in Scotland where the tradition was stronger.

For Edinburgh there is scanty evidence. A committee was established in 1820 'to found schools on the principle of locality' set out in Chalmer's Christian & Civic Economy, and parishes were sub-divided into districts which visitors then investigated - noting names, occupations, church attendance, school attendance and literacy. The general proportion among children of the poor in all parishes was at least one third, and in several instances as great as one half unable to read at all; while in other cases the degree of attainment was not very great.

As to adults, the delicacy of the questioning made a correct estimate impossible in the opinion of the committee, but they concluded that the numbers unable to read were immensely greater than could be discovered by superficial observation.¹²

The Chalmers Mss¹³ contain a report of a small survey in the area of West Port. There were 52 persons in 17 families. Of two boys and nine girls, five were unable to read. Only two adults were illiterate, both Catholic Irish. In St. Cuthbert's poorhouse in 1868 of all those over 14, 22% could read, 61% read and write, 52% could do neither.¹⁴

Local Sabbath School societies, Christian instruction societies and city missions were particularly active and alive in the 1820's and 1830's to education destitution in Glasgow. A survey conducted by two members of Greyfriars Church congregation¹⁵ computed only twelve people above six unable to read and not at school, out of a total sample of 556 souls. A larger survey of the Bridgegate and Saltmarket, the deepest of all sunken depths, revealed 163, or 10% between 6 and 15 who could not read and were not at school, out of a total of 1,550, an impressively low figure especially for the area, but no rigorous test was applied and many illiterate children must themselves have been at school.¹⁶

A city missionaries reputation for diligence in some of the worst quarters of city slums was well known. One agent reported;¹⁷

"I find that out of 200 families in one street in my district, there are 164 children between the ages of 4 and 12 who are not in any school, 60 adults who cannot read and 36 houses in which there is not a single Bible."

Probably, assuming an average of two adults per family, 15% only were unable to read.

Balanced against these figures there was a report by the minister of St. Peter's Parish.¹⁸ In a lecture in the early forties, he referred to a table of returns relating to Tron Parish; of a population of nearly 10,000 there were 1668 between the ages of 6-16, about one sixth, the proportion being small due to the fluctuating population and a very large proportion of lodgers, but while 565 children were at school, 532 or just short of one third could not read. Some places he said were better off but some were worse. He thought these figures fair specimens of great manufacturing communities.

Not until the 1830s did the Church of Scotland consider the deteriorating position of towns worthy of notice as the proliferating numbers of unrecognised Sunday School teachers had caused the Church some alarm. It recommended a class of teachers qualified to impart knowledge, and wished a survey to ascertain the extent of ignorance. In furtherance of the aim for relief, a plan was submitted to the General Assembly in 1832 for increased teachers salaries, and new and improved schools.

A preliminary table of five parishes appeared in the appendix to the Annual Report in 1835.

In a population of 40,815 in the dense city parishes, 1,457 between 6 and 15 were unable to read, 4,836 10 to 15 year olds unable to write, and 1,432 of those 15 years and above unable to read. If one assumes the usual proportion of one quarter of the total as falling between the ages of 6 and 15, the proportion is slightly over 14% unable to read. A more detailed statement appeared in 1836.¹⁹ Of seven city parishes containing a population of 54,609 the number between 6 15 unable to read was 2,231 or 16%.²⁰ In the Abbey parish of Paisley, with a population of 26,006 the illiterates between the same ages number 877. Applying the same proportion this gives a percentage of 13.5.

In the same parishes of Glasgow, 6,311 between the ages of 10 and 15 were unable to write, a figure which must have approximated to 80%; while in the Paisley parish, the 1,287 unable to write between those ages may have been about 40%. This may indicate that the simple literacy figure for Glasgow was very much lower than that indicated, or that the educational facilities provided there did not include writing or as it has been suggested earlier, the term of attendance was so short that the art was not acquired.

Of all the local censuses conducted, the most complete was that undertaken by the Glasgow Sabbath

School Union in 1846.²¹ In an abstract covering the whole city, of 47,383 children between 6 and 16, 21,656 attended week day schools. Of the 26,000 not attending about 18,000 must have attended at one time - and the turnover was rapid in these years - as only 9,430 (20%) were returned as unable to read and 16,322 (33%) unable to write. Even assuming these figures from the wide and probably superficial nature of the survey to be too high as an indication of literacy, it seems fairly certain that the low figures seen in particular areas of the city were balanced out in other areas, including working class districts.²² What the statistics leave out is the number at school who could not read. The annual reports of the Glasgow Sabbath School Union give an approximate figure of 15% for those between 1840 and 1860.²³ Probably then, 35% would be a more accurate figure of juvenile illiterates if we add those inside school with those on the streets.

These figures emphasise the residential qualification and reflect upon the social conditions of existence that either encouraged or discouraged literary attainments. Certainly literacy in Scottish towns varied greatly from parish to parish depending on the provision of schools, the activity of the minister, the extent of local charity and upper class enterprise, and the incidence of immigration from the highlands or Ireland. Any estimated general average must be qualified in the light of this situation. The high Glasgow figures of the large surveys

may be tempered somewhat by their necessarily cursory nature; so, on balance, one could expect the general average of the urban working class to fall somewhere between two thirds and three quarters literate.

It should be emphasised that many persons having been returned as able to read had only a slight degree of attainment, and that the habit of reading was far from universal, while apathy must have affected still larger numbers. Robert Buchanan in his work Schoolmaster in The Wynds insisted that being able to read imperfectly was equivalent to being unable to read at all.²⁴

Analysing area studies says much about geographical circumstances and highlights the consequences of overcrowding and multiple deprivation, but it takes the population as a whole and ignores essential differences between sub-strata. If occupation is the measure of social class which we have assumed throughout, then the most significant and conclusive information should indicate variations in literacy among different occupational groups.

We must affirm the impression that the crucial elements of the working classes - the artisans, mechanics and skilled labourers - were almost universally literate, and at a fairly high degree of attainment, enough to qualify them as aristocrats of labour. Then the persistence of the Scottish educational tradition can be affirmed where it was not beaten down by severe

poverty and degradation, or where the fragmented working class was not affected by immigration at its depressed lower levels.

c) Age, Occupation and Illiteracy

Lumping together the working classes as if they were of all one age, is as self-defeating as considering them to be one homogeneous group. Occupation and age group must be linked together to embody advances in education and status.

The first located statistics of occupation and education was contained in evidence before a Select Committee in 1816.²⁵ Archibald Buchanan, director of the Catrine Cotton Works, gave evidence to the effect that of his 875 employees, only 4% could not read, compared with 75% who could not write.²⁶ Similarly, at Denniston Cotton Works, near Downe Perthshire, 99% could read and 63% could not write,²⁷ and at Ballindalloch Works Stirlingshire, 28% were completely literate and 71% readers only.²⁸ All the employees were between 5 and 18 years of age. These were children immersed in the industrial village culture where the old literacy traditions were not yet destroyed by city life.

For those in the operative class residing throughout the country, Dr. Mitchell's report to the Commission in 1834²⁹ was very flattering, but it failed to use rigorous tests; 96% were able to read compared with England's 86%, and 53% could write, a lead of 10% over England in both cases. A breakdown of the Grandholm Mills'

educational census³⁰ enables us to understand the differentiation within occupation in one establishment. It was quite possible for one in three spinners and weavers to be totally illiterate, and for 'hacklers' and mechanics to be totally literate or semi-literate.

Not all had such well grounded optimism and showed just what could happen if statistics were placed in different hands. A report of an examination in scripture, reading and history of 698 work people aged between 13 to 21 years in four Glasgow factories,³¹ revealed that barely 32% could read well and understand what was written, and 77% could not write. The presentation of religious material must have been an intimidating experience and a difficult one for the inadequately schooled. The first reaction of many uneducated children before testing was to say they could read. These persons were not among the lowest or most neglected of the population, and the sample was thought a fair one of the education of a large proportion of the working classes in populous towns.³²

A Government Factory Inspector was convinced, having examined young persons above 13 admitted to factories in Glasgow and Dundee, that;³³

"...not above one fourth part of those young persons can read and an inconsiderable number have been taught to write and few, almost none know anything of arithmetic."

But these were usually young proletarians in the most unskilled of occupations. J.C. Symons insisted on the good education of the artisan class;³⁴

"The intelligence of the artisans of Scotland has been nowise over rated, the elder branches of the workmen in other trades are nearly, if not quite equal to the elder weavers alike in artistical skill, in mental acquirements and habits of thought; whilst the younger generation very greatly excels the contemporary class of the weaving class."

In the lead mining village of Leadhills in the south of Lanarkshire, Joseph Fletcher reported a remarkable intellectual situation,³⁵ there all the 35 children employed could read and all but the four youngest could write. The same situation prevailed in the neighbouring village of Wanlock Head.

Particularly interesting on this score are the reports of R.H. Franks on the mines in the east of Scotland.³⁶ Franks was not content with oral testing but actually checked the abilities of children he examined. The ability to read was not enormously wide, perhaps little more than half, but there are a striking number of examples of interviewed children who read well by his test but wrote poorly or even not at all.

When one turns to the handloom weavers, one finds testimony both to a severe falling-off in the education of this once prosperous class, and to a varying educational situation from city to city, and among different types of weavers. A Glasgow weaver told Commissioner Symons that not one half of the weavers' children could read well, and that very few could write. Yet a Kilmarnock weaver thought the children there were generally learning to read and write. A bright spot

apparently was Paisley where good schools were plentiful and where most of the children could read, although few could write or cipher.

Symons also makes the interesting distinction that while harness weavers had greater means to educate their children than handloom weavers, they had to employ their children as draw-boys or draw-girls at such an early age that their education was prevented.³⁷ After 1851 inspectors of factories began to make more positive judgements about education, although their findings often contradicted or revised impressions that appeared to be general.

Mr. Balfour, reporting on the state of education in his district observed that;³⁸

"Without pretending to statistical accuracy on this point, it may be affirmed with confidence that in country establishments there is a larger proportion of educated operatives than there is among those belonging to town factories."

"From the statements of parties well able to judge it would appear that 10% on an average of the town workers that is to say of young persons and adults, are unable to read or write, while the country average in this respect does not exceed 7%"

"It has also been ascertained that in Glasgow a larger proportion of these classes are able to read and write, while the reverse prevails in smaller localities; and lastly, that the aggregate number of educated females are greater in proportion than what their total numbers bears to the whole persons employed."

Later on, in order to promote the idea of an educational test before employment, the best factory statistics were taken by comparing reading abilities in occupations in different cities throughout the United

Kingdom. Daniel Walker, the Assistant Inspector of Factories issued a report on the state of education in his report for the half year ending October 1868.³⁹

Several sub-inspectors were directed to ascertain the education of a percentage of young persons at least 13 years of age, employed in the principal branches of trade carried on in their respective localities. They carefully avoided adopting too high a standard, the requirements as to reading being the mere ability to read and comprehend the meaning of an easy sentence, and as to writing, little beyond signing the name. The results appear in Appendix Table 9(VII).

Surprisingly Glasgow ranks the lowest in terms of the full literacy of its operatives with 33% literate (read and write) matched only by Newcastle upon Tyne. In comparison Newcastle has the worst percentage of illiteracy (neither read nor write) Dundee and Glasgow are second and third with 40% and 39% respectively. What Edinburgh lacked in literate workers it made up for in semi-literate ones. Of all occupations, tobacco manufacture attracted and encouraged the most ignorant workers⁴⁰ and iron ship building the best. A follow-up study appeared in 1870⁴¹ showing little marked improvement, and Alexander Redgrave was moved to add that it went far to silence the oft repeated but ill-founded boast that "education in Scotland is better and more widely diffused than elsewhere."⁴²

Redgrave's doubts were fully endorsed, when of 82 rank and file militia from operative backgrounds 46 signed for their pay with marks - they were not the lowest stratas but capable of earning good wages and a comfortable livelihood.⁴³ Nevertheless, they did not fare as badly as the destitute young boys at Rottenrow Industrial School, where 78% could not read and write,⁴⁴ or the domestic servants of the Lock Hospital⁴⁵ who were "...either totally unable to read or not sufficiently to be of any service to them."⁴⁶

If we conclude the work so far we have arrived at the following judgements as to the effectiveness of Scottish schooling in imbibing literary skills;

- 1) The 1872 Act did not create a literate public but contributed to the development of a habit of reading, to the greater ease of reading, and a wider diffusion of knowledge.
- 2) Literacy was higher than had previously been assumed for both sexes compared with England.
- 3) An over sophisticated conception of literacy has been removed; literacy is defined as the ability to read simple prose.
- 4) Literacy varies considerably between town and country, and between parish and parish. Poor Glasgow parishes show a high degree of literacy although the evidence is conflicting.

- 5) Occupation is the main determinant of education as it is of social class, therefore different job skills, even within the same establishment, exhibit different rates of educational attainment.

There remains the questions -

- a) Was there a reduction in the depth and breadth of education as numbers increased, and as the industrial revolution progressed in Scotland?
- b) How can a minimum literacy level be established?
- c) Did an older worker become more proficient at reading although his initial schooling was rudimentary?
- d) Can literacy rates be framed for occupations and sub-groups, with a reasonably large sample of cases?

These questions may be answered quite adequately if we investigate the prison population.

d) The Criminal and His Contribution to the Measurement of Education

Prisoners were a group of the population consistently well documented. Every prisoner who could read was supplied once a week with religious and secular texts, and every prisoner sentenced to three months confinement and upwards was allowed to receive instruction in reading

and writing. The General Board of Directors of Prisons in Scotland appointed under an 1839 Act⁴⁷ demanded the more systematic documentation of personal information, and the standardisation of educational conditions.⁴⁸ The job of the prison chaplain was to compute the details of each prisoner on entry to the prison and take satisfactory account of his progress.

Because of their voluminous content, such documents supply a satisfactory 'floor' below which the general literacy of the whole population would not fall, that is if we believe that the criminal class was representative of the population as a whole. Certainly in terms of occupations they cover the whole gamut of trades, both skilled and unskilled. To come under the eyes of the law was not the mark of a consistently criminal nature, but may have resulted from necessity, as in the case of the unemployed who stole to keep body alive, or the drunk and disorderly who regularly were impounded for various breaches of the peace.

As to the reliability of the statistics that is more open to question. They were not free from subjective assessments by those entering a prisoner's details in the admission books. Ability to read may have been based purely on the reading of a simple sentence and ability to write, barely the mastery of a name. In another sense they could be under-estimates. Prisoners pretended they were completely illiterate for the sake of the softer life

of the prison school. Therefore, the amount of instruction a child or adult had received when brought into gaol is by no means to be estimated by the answer he/she gave and the answers in the chaplain's return.

The juvenile classes of thieves were the most subtle, crafty, astute and mendacious body. They were perfectly aware that they were at once the objects of great compassion and that ignorance was supposed to be the cause of their position. For the purpose of prison returns the question to them was 'Can you read?' - 'No' - 'Can you write?' - 'No'. Thus prisoners recommended themselves to the compassion of the officers of the prison who placed them under the chaplain and the schoolmaster. In the course of a month or two, they acquired a degree of intelligence and a capacity for reading and writing, which seemed to show that the prison school far surpassed any other seminary for education. When they were released and brought to prison the same questions were put to them 'Can you read?' - 'No' - 'Can you write?' - 'No'.

Nevertheless, even if this was so they are still the best statistics we can obtain, and have the advantage over other sources in being objectively taken in terms of a test, and comparable over a number of years.

Appendix Table 9(X) was extracted from the total numbers of persons committed for trial or bailed, and appeared in tables of criminal offenders for the period 1837 to 1868. For the whole of Scotland, there is a

surprising consistency in the 30 year period. Complete illiteracy remains relatively constant at approximately 21% of the whole population, while complete literacy takes up approximately 18%. Those having had a superior education never account for more than 3%. The perfectly literate at 18% plus the imperfectly literate 60%, gives a population of 78% who were able to benefit from reading material.

There is no reason why these figures should not reflect the population at large. At their worst the figures locate 60% of the working class population, from the 1830s to the 1870s, able to read. At their best, it would probably include three quarters of the population, one fifth could read almost anything, while the rest had the capacity at least to read a newspaper.

What is striking is the lack of an upward or downward trend in any of the variables. Apparently industrialisation was able to go ahead without making educational demands upon the workforce. Regional variations did slightly effect the educational complexion of the criminal population, but variations between years with small samples make comparisons difficult.⁴⁹ Only sex differences manifest the usual trend, the lower incidence of complete literary among women although they were more likely to read and write imperfectly.

From this table it is not possible to draw inferences about the two important variables likely to effect literacy statistics, namely age and residence.

There is but little evidence in the criminal returns on these topics. Returns from the General Prison at Perth for long term offenders⁵⁰ supply some information on age and educational ability on admission.⁵¹ It should be noted that the sample of cases was relatively small and drawn from all parts of Scotland.

The most important and perhaps the most far reaching conclusion to be taken from the figures in Table 9(XI), is the threefold increase in writing proficiency that occurs with age for offenders of both sexes. It appears that in the case of males, of juveniles under 15 not long away from the influence of school, 18% can read well and only 1.5% can write well, for those 40 years and upwards it is 61% and 13% respectively. Now this could mean that the older prisoner lived at a time when education was more impressive, or they were less prone to lying, but it seems doubtful. Furthermore, the school is completely ineffective in imparting the bare rudiments of education to the poorest of the working classes.

Without knowledge of the number of previous convictions held by an older prisoner it is impossible to judge whether the prison education at Perth achieved these results, as contrary to widely held belief, literacy does not decline with age. More probably the desire for self-improvement and its realisation came from sources other than the school, possibly from a

longstanding adult education tradition, or a literate culture of the streets and workplace. Likewise the gravity of the crime measured by length of sentence has little bearing upon education. In point of fact, the longer the sentence, the greater seems to be the education.⁵²

Much more comprehensive sets of data appeared from 1842 onwards in the reports of the Board of Directors of Prisons in Scotland, enabling comparisons to be made between regions. As reading and writing were sub-divided and separate, greater precision was added to the results.⁵³

For the sake of comparisons, data on Scotland as a whole was compiled, and Glasgow and Edinburgh prisons looked at separately. The rationale behind the selection of these two prisons was that they stand industrially at opposite poles, one being a seat of manufacture, the other a centre of finance, consequently they should reflect differing patterns of educational opportunity, Edinburgh having the better provision of the borders' tradition.

For Scotland total illiteracy remains comparable with other statistics at 21.1%, 19.9% for males, 22.3% for females.⁵⁴ As expected illiteracy is worse in Glasgow than Edinburgh, some 10% worse - Glasgow 24.7% of total admissions, Edinburgh 15.1%. The graphs exhibit mainly unexplainable trends. The figures for all Scottish prisons show no remarkable trends throughout the century (complete illiteracy being the most

constant) although ability to read well declines until 1854, when it becomes stabilised at approximately 25% of the sample.

On the other hand, Edinburgh prison after 1850 recruits more illiterate and semi-literates than Glasgow prison, and the magnitude of the shift is so great that either a new type of literary test had more stringent requirements, or there were major changes in the education of the population. Possibly variations in the number of female inmates effected statistics most of all. Neither explanation seems satisfactory but the only important feature for our argument is the greater number of total illiterates on the west coast compared to the east, obviously reflecting poorer facilities in Glasgow. The readers in the total criminal population still total some 70% as already established.

Providing the criminal population is representative of the working class population as a whole, then;

- 1) Sixty per cent of the Scottish working class population of all ages from the 1830s to the 1870s was able to read.
- 2) Females were provided very badly with education and this emerges in their lower literacy levels.
- 3) Literacy increases with age, not vice versa.
- 4) The school was ineffective in imparting literacy to the very poor child.

- 5) Complete illiteracy remains constant and unchanging at approximately 21% of the samples.
- 6) A region more agricultural, or having a long tradition of education was more likely to possess a population with greater reading and writing skills, even at its lower social levels.
- 7) The gap between reading and writing indicates a deterioration in the depth and breadth of education.

With a view to consolidating this information and highlighting the literacy variables of age, sex, residence and more importantly occupation, a thorough-going analysis has been attempted using as a sample, 1,700 prisoners from the admission registers of Duke Street Prison, Glasgow. Conveniently the information is available for the decade most affected by industrialisation and disruption, from 1841 to 1851.

That the sample is representative of the working class population at large can be proved in three ways. Firstly, the number whose previous convictions do not amount to more than one, comprises three quarters or 1,376 of the whole number.⁵⁵ In no sense could they be called hardened criminals. Secondly, some 80%⁵⁶ of them had sentences of not more than one year; for simple thefts, breaches of the peace and drunk and

disorderly behaviour, as a result of acute poverty or festive behaviour. Thirdly, only 8% came from professional or intermediate occupations;⁵⁷ 37% were skilled, 21% partly-skilled, and 27% unskilled - a fair spread of those occupations to be found within the general population.

To understand education, abilities have been grouped;⁵⁸ 8% exhibit superior instruction, 30.5% literacy, 34% partial literacy and in conformity with previous findings one quarter are illiterate. As this is a more refined test, the percentages have a greater accuracy. 40% of the almost wholly working class population are readily able to read, whereas 34% could barely read a sentence, and write even less. Depending on ones point of view, the lowest limit of 40% on reading ability is probably the most pessimistic, but nevertheless a realistic estimate of the ability of this class and the best indication we have of the result of industrialisation on the ability of the education system to cope with the population.

Being employed or unemployed made very little difference to literacy,⁵⁹ although those with regular jobs at the time of their offence were more likely to be literates. Not surprisingly those under 12 are less well educated than those between 12 and 18.⁶⁰

On residences, thirteen separate divisions are possible.⁶¹ Prisoners who came from Ireland to occupy

the unskilled labouring jobs fare very badly, having only 30% of their number totally literate. In comparison those who spent the greater part of their life in the highland rural and Lothian regions, benefitted most from parochial school provision. The county of Renfrewshire and the major industrial town of Paisley figure lowest in the returns with 38.4% and 35% respectively. Glasgow (with 44% of the total sample) exhibits a figure similar to the national average of 41.2% literate.

Most interesting of all are the conclusions to be reached by examining what was probably the biggest influence on education, that of occupation.⁶² Not surprisingly the professionals were completely literate. On progressing downwards through the Registrar General's classification of classes, the percentages drop markedly;⁶³ Class 3, the skilled had 51% literate, Class 4, the partially skilled 41.6%, Class 5, the unskilled 27.4% whilst street traders, prostitutes, beggars and vagabonds were slightly better off, 29% of their number were literate.

Those with no occupations were the worst provided for, with only 1 in 4 able to read well. Individual occupations within each group tend to cluster around the mean, but painters, joiners, carpenters and bakers attain the very highest in educational capability. Millworkers, colliers and drawboys, all unskilled, figure very low in attainment. Only prostitutes mustered

a third of their number able to read, probably to improve their ability at thieving.

Such figures show how literacy and the impact of education was distributed in a certain fashion, not randomly but in relation to sex, age, residence and occupation. They show how the conditions of existence under which people lived enabled them to appropriate education. The occupations that were skilled, unionised, or had their own cultural environment or shorter hours necessary for mental cultivation, were adequately provided for.

In Glasgow, of 789 prisoners in Duke Street Prison 41% were readers, a statistic that conforms reasonably well to school attendance figures examined in a previous chapter. Yet these are only a 'floor' below which literacy would not fall. Much depended on the area, and good schooling in a region influenced the education of the lowest strata of society. Most probably 40%-60% of the population were readers, increasing with age and declining with poorer occupations. Certainly it is a result that means in any year there must have been more literate people than had ever been to school. Either formal institutions had a ripple effect throughout the population, or some other agencies provided informal substitutes.

One such explanation is the all pervading influence of the Sunday School. Possibly four out of five people were confined within its walls at some time in their

lives, thus it acted as the most efficient agent of basic education. A better explanation is the persistence of a strong non-formal adult education tradition, substantiated by the figures of Perth General Prison. It was the tradition of the auto-didact, the self-educated working man, born out of the dying embers of eighteenth century oral culture, of post-Napoleonic radicalism, and kindled by the swelling numbers of proletarians now called the reading public.

Part II - The Texture of Informal Education

a) The Growth of the Reading Masses

Although popular taste for reading may be dated to the excitement infused in the population with the publication of Tom Paine's Rights of Man in 1793, a broad change was coming over the people. Samuel Smiles, a popular Victorian observer, pointed out that the Chartism of the mid-nineteenth century was no mere ebullition of public opinion, but the result of over half a century, helped on by the;

"...diffusion of knowledge by means of the cheap press which has endowed it with increased power and influence." 64

The popular folk tradition of amusement was lost during the industrial revolution, and this meant it was even more necessary to read for entertainment and escape. The popular tradition - rich in folk heroes, broad humanism, proverbial wisdom, memorable events, local legend and love of the Bible, was predominantly oral.

Here reading was no friend of the rural peasant, and during times of harvest celebrations rude games and brash activities gave the lower classes their mental excitement.

As society became more urbanised Protestantism, the 'book religion' encouraged the private reading of the Bible forcing entertainment into a back seat. Jest-books became the pills to purge melancholy. Printers of these broadside ballads, precursors of the sensational newspapers, had a ready market in the lower working class, so much so that the ballad and chap book⁶⁵ continued in existence until the penny periodicals replaced them in the 1820's. To some extent this indicates that the tradition of reading among sections of the poor in town and country had never wholly disappeared, while among the middle class, the taste for reading had made headway in the eighteenth century to the detriment of the labouring poor who generally had less education.

Because the workmen worked on Saturday, reading was confined to Sundays, with the resulting popularity of the Sunday newspaper. Few amusements or shows were open on a Sunday, and where Sabbatarianism was strong as in Scotland, there was no option but to read. It was only when new amusements and sports relaxed the rigid Sundays that family reading circles declined in popularity. It should not be thought that Sunday

education was an easy thing, or the rule for the working man. Bad housing conditions, small rooms badly overcrowded, drunken neighbours, bawling children, poor lighting and little encouragement faced the would-be learner.

A typical attitude of the time was the belief that reading was ruinous to the health. Relaxation was more easily achieved outside the living quarters, in the street or cheap theatre. A dearth of spectacles finally caused poor sight, and when eyes were tired after a day's work only a special type of literature would suit dulled minds and tired bodies, and turn manual workers into habitual readers.

Under such bad conditions reading had to be an escape. The S.D.U.K. (Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge) established in England in 1826 could not countenance this motive, therefore, their zeal to spread a taste for reading was misapplied. Harsh factory conditions, hovels and starved spirits, bred intellectual discontent and the upshot was a new class of uneducated readers. New dreamers of dreams were born.

In the eighteenth century, it was customary for an author to grace his book with lists of noble and distinguished subscribers. The second edition of Howie's Scots Worthies published in 1791 was accompanied by a list of some 1,400 subscribers arranged according to places of habitations. Most of these were plain working people whose status is recorded - predominantly

weavers, but alongside came shoemakers, wrights, masons, sawyers, dyers, tanners and labourers. The significance of this list is twofold. It shows how many people were able to read and willing to read their spiritual ancestry. It was also under the influence of the French Revolution a deliberate assertion of a doctrine stated by Robert Burns, "A man's a man for a' that".

Perhaps the two beliefs which had the most long lasting effect upon the new reading masses of the first half of the nineteenth century, were Christian Evangelicalism which both encouraged and discouraged reading, and Utilitarianism which had a rational anti-Christian bias. The main propaganda agencies of evangelism were;

- 1) The Religious Tract Society established (1799) - an undenominational body.
- 2) Cheap Repository Tracts.
- 3) The British & Foreign Bible Society established 1804.
- 4) The Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (S.S.P.C.K. Scotland).
- 5) Drummond's Tract Depository at Stirling.

Their total output was phenomenal. In 1897, the Religious Tract Society sent out 38,720,000 pieces of literature.⁶⁶ In 1815 it had 124 local distribution groups. In 1854 the B.F.B.S. had 460 auxiliaries, 373 branches and 2,482 associations. Distribution was

usually through wealthy ladies and hired hawkers, a device introduced in Scotland in 1793 when an eccentric tradesman Johnny Campbell found the Religious Tract and Book Society of Scotland - better known as the Scottish Colportage Society. In 1874 it employed 228 colporters who sold in that year 55,000 copies of scripture, 840,000 periodicals for adults, 400,000 for the young and 120,000 morally elevating and 300,000 cheap hymn books.⁶⁷

With all these tracts around it appears that there could not be anything but a psychological incentive to literacy. Unfortunately, the language used was often that of the nursery. It also might advise the working class to leave their fate in the hands of their masters, at the same time as it condemned novels and the theatres for making men no better at their work. Not all protestations fell on stony ground; some tracts held an intense excitement, especially if they were in story form.

Religious parties, by debarring the poor from any acquaintance with pleasurable reading in elementary school, temporarily limited the attractiveness of a literary experience among them. In elementary school, cheapness was observed, 'the multiplicity of utility' - making money go further, was the chief criterion. This is not to say that the evangelical schemes had little success. Among the middle class the campaign was so successful that after the first third of the nineteenth

century, the public was thought respectable enough to enjoy fiction with a clear conscience, and in the 1860s novels came out with great profusion from religious publishing houses.

The Utilitarianism of the age with its rational bias was embodied in institutional form in the mechanic's institute. The history of these institutes gives a penetrating insight into the failure of formal institutions to gain a hold of the desired clientele. It made public the reason for men voting with their feet, and opting for other methods of self-education rather than cling to an education that had only minor relevance. They were not ungrateful men. There was a clash of cultures here.

Generally it is accepted that mechanic's institutes failed to attract mechanics in large enough quantities for them to be called genuinely working class institutions;

"They have with only one or two notable exceptions failed to attract any significant proportion of the working class and instead have catered for the lower middle class clerks and shopmen." 68

Yet at no time was their development evenly distributed throughout the country.⁶⁹ The highlands of Scotland, south west lowlands and central Wales were not catered for by athenaeums, lyceums or institutes.

In Scotland the forerunner of the English mechanic's institute was the Edinburgh School of Arts founded in 1821. The Glasgow Mechanics' Institute established on the 5th November 1823 and generally recognised as the most

democratic or organisations was the child of the Andersonian Institute of Glasgow and George Birbeck's mechanic's class. Later, Birbeck and his Edinburgh colleagues were instrumental in founding the London Mechanics' Institute in 1824. The fees charged at this establishment were prohibitively high for working men, payment for a lecturer's services was in the region of five guineas a session. The result was that during periods of unemployment, working men who could not afford the fees left the institute to be gradually taken over by the artisan class, a process typical of other institutes throughout the country between 1823 and 1850.

The mechanics of Glasgow and Edinburgh either because of the traditional Scottish zeal for learning, or because they had opportunities for elementary education, seemed better able than their English counterparts to stomach the long and rigorous courses in chemistry, physics and maths which institutes originally set out to provide. In these institutes no concessions were made to the desire for entertainment and lecture courses continued to serve as the main instrument of educational work which in England was taken over by the class. It was only the larger centres in Scotland which permitted a fairly heavy turnover of students that systematic lecture courses had any lasting success. Generally speaking the average working man had neither

the time, the inclination, nor the previous education to profit by courses of this kind.

Throughout their stormy career the mechanics' institutes had a philosophical backing that was an amalgam of eighteenth century French rationalism and nineteenth century British materialism. It was a faith in the machine and the printing press - the 'God in the Machine' would extinguish Chartism and Socialism and useful knowledge of economic and political principles was to be the new brook. A craving for methodicalism deplored desultory reading and self-improvement was the new byword of the day. Literature was deplored as it was not the means by which the new middle class came to power. It was time wasting and profitless. The working class were to have no amusement since amusement equalled play; self-improvement equalled science and evangelism.

Not surprisingly therefore, where middle class control of mechanics' institutes was strong, there was a dearth of literature; where democratic working class control predominated so also did literature and reading. An English example will suffice to prove the point;

"Stourbridge figures imply that every member on the average took out 24 volumes in the year and that every volume on the average was issued twenty four times. And this was the institute which, as we have noted above, was at this time going in for ventriloquial entertainments and other spectacular attractions." 70

The mechanic had an escapist taste and needed diversion when his oily presence entered the institute. Managers of institutions sought to withhold escapist literature that would give pleasure to the masses after a hard day's work, on the pretext that books were only for self-improvement, hence science texts were in abundance. Only later in the nineteenth century was mass literature introduced and even then it had a sentimental aura - chatty homilies were printed - 'Good Habits in Reading' 'Books That Have Helped Me'.

In fact the contribution the mechanics' institutes made to adult education was directly proportional to the degree to which they abandoned their original purpose. Only when utilitarian motives were expunged did they swell the number of general readers. The mere fact that the middle class were not interested in literature for the artisan and mechanics, meant that they preferred to exploit his practical inventiveness rather than educate him. Very soon, for the sake of the life of the institutes, libraries admitted books that had been forbidden and allowed play readings where artisans could not afford to go to the theatre. Charles Dickens's work achieved notoriety in this way.

Running parallel with mechanics institutes were the informal organisations of people in a given neighbourhood for the buying and exchange of books, out of which libraries developed. In London and the provinces,

circulating libraries became sidelines to barbering, confectionery, news vending, stationery and tobacco trades. Such relics of the past still exist in Scotland today where light fiction or romance is in demand.⁷¹ Sometimes a book club became identical with a mutual improvement society, and sometimes it sprang from class meetings organised by Methodists or other dissenting denominations. Two potent elements encouraging the formation of such groups were the censorship agencies e.g. village libraries connected with parish churches, and the Religious Tract Society which developed the library grant system in 1832.

Before the Public Libraries Act of 1850, the most notable purveyor of popular taste via the library was Samuel Brown of Haddington. In 1817 he liquidated some balance of militia insurance for which he could not find claimants, bought 200 volumes with the proceeds and started a circulating library in the East Lothian. The books were divided into four sets, and each remained in a village for two years after which it was replaced by another set and moved to a second village. Additional purchases were financed by small contributions from private individuals and several missionary societies, as well as by five shilling subscription charges to residents of larger towns in the region, who were given first access to new books before they went into the country.

In twenty years libraries grew to 2,380 volumes which were literally in circulation in forty seven sets. Of Brown's original selection of books two thirds were of a moral and religious nature, the remainder were books on travel, agriculture, popular science and mechanical arts. The numbers of religious volumes grew and inevitably a saturation point was reached and people showed a diminishing inclination to borrow. The high price of books meant fiction lovers flocked to the circulating libraries, and the output of the libraries was only matched by a spate of cheap literature and papers of disjointed and unauthorised extracts from books, clippings from floating literature, old stories and stale jocularities.

From a class of artisans and shopkeepers who seldom if ever went to an adult school or mechanics' institute, the periodical reading public received most of its permanent recruits. The working class press represented by such notables as The Poor Man's Guardian and Working Man's Friend contained hard-hitting commentaries of the politically motivated. There was the melodrama of the Sunday newspapers, the surveys of crime and penny numbers of Gothic Fiction. The Chambers Journal - a Chambers Brothers' venture - and the Penny Magazine were responsible for any 'culture' that the skilled artisan or shopkeeper obtained. In comparison,

the daily papers were only accessible to the ordinary townsman, and weekly papers were best for the workers and his family. Their enormous success over the more educational contributions of philanthropists was due simply to the fact that they kept the eyes busy while the brain took a rest.

Potentially, the new reading public was a powerful genie released from a bottle, composed of an artisan culture little desiring a schooling in the finalities of utilitarianism, but preferring a literary escape from the poor housing conditions of the new cities and the long hours imposed by factory discipline. A part of this new reading public had some contact with formal adult education, and with groups of self-improvers and book societies, but the majority were either self-educated or not 'educated' in the school sense at all.

Step by step the auto-didact made his appearance - the self-educated working man. What made a man sacrifice so much for so little, and what were his fortunes?

b) The Auto-Didact and his World - The Link Between Childhood and the Literate Adult

In a work on the Scottish tradition in education, Isobel Finlayson concluded;⁷²

"It is hardly putting it too strongly to say that the typical Scot of the first half of the nineteenth century is a self-educated man, in whose learning process schools and universities played an incidental part."

The navvy Paddy MacGill drew together similar threads;⁷³

"Scotland is a country where self-educated men abound and where mental powers in all walks of life assert themselves in spite of fate and fortune."

However, compared with the hordes whose reading was confined to penny shockers and sensational weekly papers, the serious students in the lower and middle classes were few. But there were and always will be the cultural custodians of the ideals of a country, reflected in popular myth and popular culture.

Much of the vitality of the 'reforming movement' 1793-1832 came from the people who were inspired by Bible reading and by popular ballads sacred or satirical that spread new ideas even amongst the illiterate. Scottish popular culture was rich in this element. In fact the style of the old Latin culture of the church was now broken and the informal education of the popular hymn and popular lampoon of the circle of friends reading the scripture, became for a time a more potent social force than formal instruction at school and university.

Stimulus was to come from other sources too - the poet springing from the unschooled was a picturesque anomaly out of the pages of Rousseau - the flesh and blood support for the romantic theory, especially of Sir Walter Scott. Middle class utilitarians took over the untaught hero and made him serve their own philosophy - he became a 'saints legend' of the machine age. Samuel Smiles lectures in the Leeds Mechanics Institute in 1854

had their Stevensons and Watts, upright men of temperance and character, but there were also the picturesque among the working class.

A representative of the working class student of politics and economics was Thomas Dickson a cutter of corks for public houses and gin palaces, whose thoughtful letters Ruskin answered in a series of discourses called Time and Tide. There was also the geologist Hugh Millar - the Scot who had a cabinet maker friend with a library of 80-100 books, and who became the local celebrity by composing a thirty line poem on the 'Hill of Cromarty'. William Chambers the Edinburgh bookseller, as an apprentice in 1820 earned hot rolls every morning by appearing at a bakeshop at 5.00 a.m. to read to a baker and his two sons for two and a half hours, while they kneaded their dough. The baker was not particular as to the subject, all he stipulated was something droll and laughable.⁷⁴

This habit of reading aloud was quite common. The working man in the pub or coffee house would listen avidly to the news while one of his mates read it out. Only after the Stamp Act limited the circulation of Cobbett, Wooler, Hone and Carliles' periodicals did the unskilled labourer cease to listen to papers read aloud.⁷⁵

In many instances the extent of serious reading by the masses was quite strong. The 'Culture at Home' publishers - Cassell - sold three million five hundred

volumes of the Chandos Classics between 1868 and 1884. 'People's editions' of classics also enjoyed wide sales. The genuine book lover did not confine himself to books of great direct vocational value, but ranged widely, did not 'get ahead' fast, but enriched his own life with these simple pleasures. It was only the reader in a large town who would have access to a fair sized collection. Secondhand shops or street auctions brought prices of classic poets very low and until cheap reprints appeared in the second half of the nineteenth century, the keen working class reader would choose to re-read old favourites like Pilgrim's Progress or Robinson Crusoe.

So as not to give a false impression it must be made plain that the self-taught left few recollections of their lives. Only when men, who in later life, became public figures through choice or circumstance was there time and inclination to leave records for the future. Their works bear interesting titles. Here are a few;

The Unfortunate Genius (1852) - Anon (a Leeds handloom weaver who educated himself by copying signposts over shops.

Pursuit of Knowledge under Difficulties -
G.C. Craik

Rhyme & Recollections of a Handloom Weaver
(1880) - William Thom

My Schools & Schoolmasters (1887) - Hugh Millar

c) Old Myths and New Realities

It is a frequently voiced opinion that adult education has not had such an impressive history in Scotland because the education system did not need a remedial education to follow formal schooling. There was the myth of a social ladder in formal education that allowed the 'lad o' pairts'⁷⁶ to gain a university education, and go from the gutter to 'wag his pow' in the pulpit, similar to the American myth of 'log cabin to White House'. Few Scots put this into practice, although Alexander Anderson the railway navvy did become assistant librarian in Edinburgh University, and another navvy Paddy MacGill, was appointed to the editorial staff of the Daily Express.⁷⁷

Much evidence does point towards the importance of informal adult education and auto-didacticism as MacGill's quote on a previous page suggests. Social mobility may have been high during the eighteenth century when the gulf between laird and tenant, master and man was seldom too wide to be bridged, but the building of the New Town Edinburgh in the late eighteenth century, and the move from east to west in mid nineteenth century Glasgow, advanced a movement of social isolation by residence that was already coming into existence.

Social mobility and impulses for education emanating within the family tended to disappear during

the industrial revolution. The sweated labour of industrial districts was attacking the foundation of home and its educational worth. To prove her point Finlayson investigated 50 people - 'individuals of superior intelligence'. Nineteen were from poor homes, nineteen from superior homes and twelve from comfortable homes. Of the nineteen poor families Group A, seven received adequate (secondary) school education and of these three went to University; of the twelve comfortable families Group B, twelve received adequate schooling and eight went to University; of the nineteen from superior homes Group C, nineteen had adequate schooling and thirteen went to University.

Two thirds of Groups B and C went to University, one sixth of Group A. For those coming from poor homes, schooling was usually interrupted by poverty or ill-health;

"In one of these (Dame school) was imparted to me all the tuition I ever received in the way of letters - gathering in after life being only crumbs from the rich man's table." 78

Education in after life was all but in recognised letters.

There was William Pirie Smith who picked up scraps of Latin from a grammar school boy in Aberdeen, and a self-educated shepherd boy in Mear's Memoir of James Hyslop, who walked three miles over a hill in the dark to consult a worthy old woman about letters in old book of sermons which looked like f's - she explained they

were "lang esses". Or Alexander Somerville who learned on the Ogle Burn at the Verge of Branxton Estate from a blind man named James Dawson;

"...in the company of this singular old man, he believed himself and me surrounded with the personages of history and romance, did I learn anything of the world which is laid before us in books - anything of other ages, and other classes of society."

or;

"...Robert Wallace whose wife taught him to read after marriage and who at the time when my father was in the quarry had read eighteen different authors on astronomy and many others on the subject...He would travel twenty miles on a Sunday and back again to borrow a book on astronomy." 79

Alongside them came George Donald of highland ancestry, a boy born in a poor district of Glasgow in 1800 who went to a factory when he was eight. The manager noticed his desire to read and therefore let him attend a village school for two hours a day to learn English, Geography and Latin. But George was lucky. Where no educational outlet was found, the worker scholar became addicted to drink, led a bohemian life, or committed suicide. Hugh Millar describes his friend William Rose (born 1803);

"A poor friendless lad of genius diluted his thin consumptive blood on bad potatoes and water."

and he ended his account of self-education with;⁸⁰

"Poor William, his name must be wholly unfamiliar to the reader and yet he had in him that which ought to have made it a known one ... ere his death I saw him resign in succession his flute and pencil and yield up all the hope he had once cherished of being known."

These situations were further aggravated when one realises that a good education could be obtained by all but those from the poorest homes and this increased the supply of educated men in excess of demand.

There were brighter spots. A library addict like James McFarlane, a pedlar poet claimed to have educated himself from library books "by leaving a small deposit, I borrowed books in almost every town where there was a public library."⁸¹ Patrick Geddes' father took him to Perth to join the mechanics' institute. He read at the rate of nine or ten books a week until he soaked up the whole library.⁸² The 'Poets Corner' in newspapers became outlets for the frustrated talents of these men.

A self-educated man not only suffered the isolation from recognised educational institutions, but also a social isolation from his peer group. He would appear to his colleagues as sulky, proud, aloof and would often be discouraged. The urban life where numbers and degradation were most imposing meant that attitude would often be extended. There was a consolation in the fact that the phenomenon found in English educational history at this period, that knowledge is a danger for all but a few, was alien to Scottish tradition.

That voluntary association of the like minded occupied a central place in the auto-didact's scheme was an outcome of this social isolation. Societies and

clubs for mutual improvers, even if they were rudimentary or transitory, predominated;

The garden of Gordon's Hospital lay close by out work ... There of a summer day, we could meet and gossip over all we knew of books and the outer world." 83

The world of the auto-didact as we have intimated was all but secure from distress or neglect. The social context of the industrial revolution had flung men into seething cauldrons called cities, which were detrimental to health and morals alike. If a man never joined a radical group or was not a customer for mutual improvement, he did not stand untouched by education, or alone. The multiple facets of a deprived social life developed a corresponding taste for the unusual or the degrading, and if a man took to serious literature, it was a feeble attempt to get out of the squalor in which he was imprisoned.

Henry Mayhew's work on London Labour and the London Poor is a useful survey of the character and feel of the whole epoch in man's intellectual development.⁸⁴ His conclusions on the uneducated state of some trades may not have been a just criticism of Scotland as a whole, but in the wynds and closes of Edinburgh and Glasgow, the like was sure to be true.⁸⁵

Appendix Table 9(XXI) is a breakdown of street sellers and street literature as used by Mayhew in Volume I of his work. The amounts in the right hand column account for the London yearly expenditure on the

street sales or the annual takings of the sellers. It is evident that the sale of books, stationery and ballads was the most profitable followed by playbills and executions. Of the total expenditure of £33,103 all was spent by the working class populace on what we might conjecturally call 'educational literature'. This is a surprising amount when we view Mayhew's exposure of ignorance nationwide, but nevertheless symptomatic of the need and extent of self-education for escape. A high literacy rate for Scotland was sure to place such literature in even greater demand.

Abilities varied from trade to trade;

"I have stated elsewhere that only about one in ten of the regular costermongers is able to read." 86

but there was some desire to learn;

"For the gratitude of the poor creatures to anyone who seeks to give them the least knowledge is almost pathetic." 87

even if it was misplaced;

"In course God Almighty made the world, and the poor bricklayers labourers built the houses afterwards - that's my opinion" 88

or perhaps more basic to our understanding of education;

"The term education is merely understood as meaning a complete knowledge of the arts of buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest. 89

All along it was a case of provision;

"The experiment so successfully tried at Liverpool of furnishing music of an enlivening and yet elevating character at the same price as the concerts of the lowest grade, shows that the people may be won to a delight in beauty instead of bestiality and teaching us again that it is our fault to allow them to be as they are and not theirs to remain so." 90

Mayhew was not insensitive though, to what the self-educated desire to read left to his own caprice;

"...murders, seductions, crime-cons,
explosions, alarming accidents, assassinations,
death of public characters, duels and love
letters." 91

Popular or notorious murders were the 'great goes', these usually being the stock-in-trade of the running patterers. But there were those that indulged in literature;

"There's nothing in my trade (streetseller
of books) that sells better or indeed so
well as English Classics" 92

The readiest sale was for volumes of Shakespeare, Pope, Thomson, Goldsmith, Gowper, Burns, Byron, Scott and of course other poetry.

In summary of Mayhew's work two interesting observations can be made;

- 1) The predicament of some of the book readers was wretched. Mayhew sights the case of the son of a sheep's trotter woman who was crippled and who sought solace in his books. When medical services were negligible and suffering inevitable, such cases must have been quite common.
- 2) As we have mentioned the self-educated were usually ostracised by their peer group, but another form of education was probable besides street literature;

"... but old Bill often volunteers to read has to spell the hard words so, that one can tell what the devil he is reading about. I never hears anything about books; I never heard of Robinson Crusoe if it wasn't once at the Vic (Victoria Theatre) ... I don't know much good that ever anybody I knows ever got out of books; they're fittest for idle people. I can't say how much I spends a year in plays ... perhaps 5/-." 93

If the workers by hand believed reading was for the idle, they believed the theatre to be active, and entertainment a rest.

Whilst sensational street literature with a generous helping of serious fiction was common in London the chap book and Burns were digested with equal vigour in Scotland. When the chap book became the Bible of the uneducated, output in Scotland was estimated at 200,000 annually. Dugald Graham, the Skellat Bellman of Glasgow, became its faithful bard.

Chap books, which sprung into existence in the mid eighteenth century and stayed until the first 30 years of the nineteenth century immortalised the expressions, habits and everyday life of the Scottish commonality. In the book selling trade they were distinguished by their inferior paper and typography. Being 24 pages long and illustrated by woodcuts, they sold from a farthing up to 6d and 1/-. There were humorous sketches, sacred and profane, political and sectarian squibs, histories romantic and narrative, jest-books and manuals of instruction in dancing, cookery, charms and the interpretation of dreams.⁹⁴

The Scottish chap book was superior in production to any other and was sold by chapmen or pedlars who hawked them around the country districts of Scotland. When travel was infrequent and roads poor, these hawkers were a professional rather than a trading class. Poor educational provision for adults, who had sufficient education to feel the want of cheap literature meant homely tracts for educational amusement were much desired. The chap books bore such titles as John Cheap : The Chapman : Leper : The Tailor : Paddy from Cork : The Whole Proceedings of Jackie & Maggie's Courtship : Janet Clinker's Oratorios : Simple John and His Twelve Misfortunes.

Ingenious titles were bound to titillate those in melancholic moods, but to assume that they were all of this nature is to prejudge their educational value. They were divided into five types;

- 1 Humorous
- 2 Instructive
- 3 Romantic
- 4 Superstitious
- 5 Song Ballads and Party Squibs

The instructive ones consisted of history, biography, religion and morals, manuals of instruction and almanacs. An example of the history material is sufficient to understand their quality - The Twelve Seasons : The Kings and Queens of Scotland : Free Masonry : The Battle of Ottoburg :

Executions in Scotland from the Year 1600 : Massacre of
Glencoe : Edinburgh.

By the end of the eighteenth century when flying stationers (distributors of broad sheets) were welcome guests in every hamlet, stimulus to greater output was given by Dugald Graham the extraordinary educator who turned his experience to a vulgar public taste. Born in 1724 he was a lame and deformed vagrant who followed men into battle. His best works were written between 1745 and 1799 but survived into the next century. He collected many of the stories then current, and gave them local colour and a coarse flavour. In other cases he seized upon the common customs of the poor and wove around them a humorous trait of narratives similar to that of Chaucer. It was in this early educational contempt for authority and their disregard of what later became propriety that their historical value lies.

d) Some Samples of a Labourer's Life

The attitude to education of the self-educated Scot differed most markedly according to trade and circumstances. Nowhere in the history of Scottish labour is there a hankering after the past, and such homage paid to high-land culture and the vernacular tradition as in the case of the weavers.

In the late eighteenth century a weaver could earn 20/- weekly for four days work a week in a light, undisciplined trade. He would set his loom up in the

early morning, set a book up at his side and proceed to educate himself through literature. Often the weaver prescribed to a book club thereby leaving libraries of information behind him. The depression in the cotton trade, when linen was replacing traditional cloth, and the new recruits after Waterloo changed the outlook of the weaver radically. The price of cotton manufacture fell while labour was subject to increased hours and time work. The weaver in his struggle with capital showed an increasing resentment to the machine and consequently a greater inclination to flights of fantasy. From the rationalisation of science and its mechanics, he turned for his education to poetry; ⁹⁵

"Who dare measure in doubt the restraining influence of these very songs? To us they were all instead of sermons. Had one of us been bold enough to enter a church he must have been ejected for the sake of decency... Church bells rang not for us. Poets were indeed our Priests."

John Duns in his memoir of Sir James Y. Simpson⁹⁶ describes a small industrial community in Bathgate around 1800. The townspeople were handloom weavers quick-witted and hard drinkers. A feature of their way of life was a point of constant debate - the affairs of Kirk and Commonwealth. But their future was crumbling before the advent of a machine and it was obvious that they should seek a new way out. With prosperity just a memory and the future uncertain, they had no love for the machine, and the power of the machine to give them

a higher standard of living was something they could not grasp. Poetry reading provided the spiritual consolation that the church did not provide.

The contribution of this poetry in the mainstream of Scottish literature was that it endeavoured to express concrete reality in simple forms, to make sense of the everyday for men and women with scant time to study. Such people at most knew a few standard authors. This poetry applied a pseudo-Burns manner (a descriptive naturalism) to actuality, as against the myth-making principle of romanticism.

The cult of the unlettered bard, such as Burns, was an integral part of the life of the common people. His verses were often read aloud, or imitated and written mostly for the working class audience. Significantly William Thom signed his first work 'Serf'. Examples of this kind marked the intellectual awakening that accompanied the early movement of the largely uneducated and self-taught working class, so often presented by historians rather as an undirected protest extorted by degrading poverty.

More popular than the weaver poets was the work of the least respected and lowest of occupations, the navvies. It was a hard living, hard drinking and hard fighting life, where death was just an 'overhang' away. In these circumstances, it is surprising that anything literary was produced. A nomadic, precarious life, lodging in shanties and going on randies, was not conducive to study.

Terry Coleman remarks in his work on the railway navvies;⁹⁷

"As you walked in one of these huts you would see half a dozen empty spirit bottles and walls covered with cuttings from Police News and other penny dreadfuls."

The Police News was in style and format the forerunner of the "News of the World" and when brought into the huts was recited aloud for the benefit of the others.

Despite all hardships, there were the adult navvies who informally educated themselves well enough to get into print like, Alexander Anderson, John Taylor, Patrick MacGill and Tom McGuire. Some used mainly religious material, issued by navy missionaries at a penny a time.

John Taylor born in 1839 was a wandering navvy in Scotland who worked waterways, quarries and railways. His main literary work was Poems Chiefly on Themes of Scottish Interest (1875) containing fugitive verses to nature, elegies and hymns. Alexander Anderson (1845-1909) of Kirkconnell Dumfriesshire, was the most famous bachelor navvy. He worked for 16 years as a surfaceman on the old Glasgow and South-west railway. He was a self-educated man who taught himself French, German and Italian sufficiently well to read in the original their poets and writers. He covered a fairly wide range of lyrical and narrative subjects in his verse, but his own practical knowledge of life is contained chiefly in his two volumes A Song of Labour and Other Poems and Songs of the Rail. Most of the collection already appeared in a popular Scottish family periodical under

the pseudonym 'Surfaceman'.

Anderson is a Samuel Smiles's hero working as a humble navvy on the line for 17/- per week and living in a village remote from centres of learning;

"In winter when we were breaking stones, I took Ahn's German Method with me to work. All day long I conjugated verbs to the accomplishment of the swish and clank of the hammer and was indeed proud when I was able to read Schiller's William Tell without once consulting a dictionary." 98

At the doings of this self-educated working man, the Scotsman newspaper wailed; 99

"He is apparently familiar with German literature talking glibly of Schiller and Goethe and prefixing to his pieces German quotations, which we presume him able to translate."

In 1880 Anderson attained the post of assistant librarian at the University of Edinburgh a move that thwarted his artistic endeavours until he ceased to write at all.

Then there was Tom McGuire who sat on the roadside reading an English translation of Schopenhauer, and Patrick MacGill who read Victor Hugo in tunnels by the light of a naphtha lamp and wept over Les Miserables. He read Sartor Resartus and Montaigne and his books got covered with rust, sleeper tar and grease. A ganger called Horse told him he read so much he would end his days in a mad house or the House of Commons.

Many more perhaps no less prolific have disappeared in the annals of time.

In answer to the question, what made a self-educated man sacrifice so much? there are three possible answers : necessity, curiosity and ambition. Isobel Finlayson concludes that the possibility of a rise to fortune for self-educated men was dim; "... 'tis a pretty wide expansion from the muck pile to the mansion" commented McGuire. Many suffered or gave up on the way. But more importantly, it was a reaction to the dearth of formal education. Informal education meant that you were either intellectually awake, or you were destined for a life of ceaseless toil, with perhaps recognition for the few like Anderson and Patrick McGuire.

Next came ambition. Hugh Millar, who wrote My Schools and Schoolmasters 1857, married above his status in life and was determined to leave the ranks of the manual workers. Others wished to become lyrical poets like Burns or win prizes like David Farquhar, who wrote a prize essay in the National Sabbath Essay Competition in 1847. Farquhar worked a thirteen hour day at a Dundee foundry and yet found time to form a mutual improvement society which tackled the essay. He defended the Sabbath on educational and cultural grounds - labour was a machine all the week - his happiness would perish if it were not for the Sabbath.

By degrees the industrial revolution with its powerful effects on all aspects of the economy, was

creating self-educated, self-conscious men out of the raw material of humanity, and was a potent force for breaking and releasing dormant traditions.

Chapter X

Conclusion

At this stage there is little point in repeating the detailed testimony of previous chapters. In conclusion it is as well to try and provide an answer to two broad questions regarding education and the Scottish working class. First, could Scottish education have coped without State interference, and secondly, what educational trends common in Scottish and English society harnessed the working class to the needs of the bourgeoisie? Answers to these questions will endorse or refute the approach adopted in this thesis.

a) Voluntarism versus State Interference

The Education (Scotland) Act that passed into law on the 6th August 1872 effectively led to the creation of a 1000 school boards in Scotland, and a separate committee of the Privy Council known as the Scotch Education Department. For a decade after the passing of the act state education was neither non sectarian, nor free, nor effectively compulsory. Needless to say it did indirectly strengthen denominational influences in education since ministers were elected to boards. These ties had been weakened by non sectarian thinking in the 1860s and the 1861 legislation that freed schoolmasters from religious tests.

Many writers have thought that the price paid for the act in secondary education was a higher degree of

social stratification.¹ Previous chapters however have highlighted the fact that stratification was all but complete by 1860. Conflict now came out into the open when middle class control over parochial schools was threatened by popular education. In retaliation, and as a result of the expropriation of endowments, fee paying day schools became essentially middle class schools. They had fees that were lower than would have been necessary but for the endowments, but high enough to deter working class parents.

Rather than being an invention aimed at setting back Scottish education half a century, the passing of the act resulted from pressures making themselves public in the 1860s. Criminal statistics provided by the Board of Supervision, the Registrar General's analysis of illegitimate births, reports on the condition of labour in factories and in farms, pamphlets on the decline of church going, and the debate on public health, stirred public conscience and aroused disenchantment with voluntarism. Education, long canvassed as an antidote to political and social evils, was now generally accepted in part.

Alongside these developments the Second Report of the Argyll Commission was published at the height of the debate about Disraeli's 'leap in the dark' with the extension of the Parliamentary franchise that he proposed. In fact a new education bill seemed to be a way of saving the social collapse of the economic system by means of education.

A conclusion of this sort approaches what historians label as the 'pessimistic' view of the effects of the industrial revolution. Stated simply it means that the period brought for the workers such precarious economic circumstances and moral degradation that, as a consequence, education was among the important human provisions or social services to decline with regard to underconsumption or underinvestment. While not accepting totally the pessimist's argument, this thesis goes a long way to substantiate these views of decline or at least stagnation.

A not insubstantial criticism of the pessimistic position has come from the work of Dr. E.G. West² and a short review of his approach must be attempted to test for internal inconsistency, or digression from the Scottish experience.

It is Dr. West's argument that the history of education has hitherto too much rested on the assumption that intervention by the state has been both good and necessary, and that it was not until such intervention, particularly the acts of the 1870's, that as much was done for education as might be expected. Furthermore, it is necessary to assume that the private sector was inefficient and that increased efficiency was marked by successive stages of state action. West tries to prove that, on the contrary, as large a proportion of net national income was being spent on education in the 1830s as in the 1920s, and that voluntary school

provision in the 1820s and 1830s experienced a 'take-off'.

Although his figures relate particularly to England they have serious faults, which makes his approach questionable. He revises Lord Kerry's 1833 statistics upwards, although these are gross overestimates.³ They include adventure schools which for want of a better term were primitive day-care centres for the working class. Moreover, he confuses those on the books with those on the roll, taking little regard to compensate for the inflated returns which it was the responsibility of the schools to make. Strangely enough with regard to Scotland he arrives at the right answer for the wrong reasons;

"We conclude that writers seem to have accepted too readily the view that Scotland enjoyed substantially superior investment and progress in education compared with England, and the opinion that legislation was the most important agent in the former country and the most crucial missing link in the latter" 4

Doubtless the 1696 legislation was swamped by the needs of industry, but it is West's laissez-faire theory of education that unwittingly reveals the paltry subsidies given to scholars via the parochial school in the first half of the nineteenth century.⁵

In line with techniques used in this thesis he uses school age as the bench-mark for attendance deficiencies, but with little discussion of why specific age groups are used, or why he accepts the 'one in six rule' (those at school to population).⁶ Calculations by M.J. Cullen⁷

help to prove that the proportion of the national income spent on education in 1920 was double that of 1833, not 70% as high - the figure used by West.

Because the growth of new schools was high between 1815 and 1840, West and others have been led to over-estimate the contribution of private education. Since many private schools were short-lived the impression would be gained at any point in time that there had been a large increase in the number of schools. Yet fluctuations in donations and economic pressure, contributed significantly to school deaths. If anything West assumes an unlimited capability on the part of the working class to purchase education privately. Throughout his work he disregards analysis of stratas of the working class, each with its own specific problems and consumption patterns.

Economists' arguments based upon the notion of the free market mechanism, with fees to distribute education, blindly accepts the Victorian belief that exacting school pence enhanced its value to the recipient. This argument grossly underestimates the objections to perfect competition. We cannot assume that there is perfect knowledge among the consumers. At worst adventure schools springing up periodically kept down the demand for a better system to reach the masses of people. If anything, mediocre accommodation suppressed the demand to the available supply, and only then did the pricing system

operate. One good school in a district was likely to siphon-off the most able scholars as we have shown, and an optimum growth rate, well below the number eligible was ever present in mission school activity.

If voluntarism is grounded upon the argument that there was more accommodation than parents were willing to use, or that 45% of the young should be at school, then it worked. Because charity was incapable of catering for all, it failed.

Parental ignorance as to education inevitably meant that the right to education could only be imposed as a matter of principle to be endorsed by law. As long as the aristocracy of the working class was catered for in the relatively stable atmosphere of the sessional school, or the better class of parochial establishment, then they said little on behalf of their own class. Once more the social safety valve was guaranteed. For the rest, the dispensers of alms divided the sub-political mass into the deserving and undeserving poor.

A barrier to providing more and earlier help to poor families was the Victorian patriarchal concept of the family. In law the father was the head and virtual owner of his wife and children, and when various acts with regard to children appeared in the 1870s, the child became a financial burden. In part this varied challenge to the father's position in his family, reinforced the manual worker's attitude to education, and his reluctance to accept the advantages offered. It was one of the

reasons why the half-time system survived largely unchecked until 1918. Not only were the parents not educated enough to demand education, they were too poor to afford it, and the father too dominant in dispensing his own requirements to his children. Contrary to Victorian views, the family as an educational institution for promoting education among the working class was the cause, not the cure for educational backwardness, and in point of fact was detrimental on all counts.

Lest we underestimate a countervailing challenge by the working class themselves we may ask, where was education promoted by the working class for their own children? Was there a counter educational system, or just pockets of resistance?

Evidence scattered throughout various commissions and censuses,⁸ reveals that private adventure schools were quite common in mining areas and industrial villages, but they were not models of faultless anti-authoritarian thinking, being rather variable in quality and circumstance. Left to themselves none but the more privileged sections of the workers pressed for educational reform and supported industrial schools, temperance societies and mechanics institutes. The most politically aware canvassed on behalf of their own class.⁹ Partly it was a response to the failure of reform agitation in the eighteen twenties, thirties, and forties.

Following the Chartist upsurges a wedge was driven between the working class vanguard, and the rest, so that

education became a guarantee of upward social mobility for the few. On the whole trade unions neglected substantially the education of their members, but mutual improvement societies, secular schools, Chartist and Owenite schools did provide for a minority, but barely a statistically significant number. By the end of the century private utopias aimed at producing the desired effects in place of necessary social changes, shifted their ground to working through social institutions in a piecemeal but nevertheless accumulatively successful fashion. Education by the working class seems to have taken a backseat compared with the bourgeois response and fear of working class numbers, and their growing economic and political power.

Perhaps the strongest argument in favour of the adhoc system prevalent in Scotland before the 1870s was the particularly favourable statistics of literacy. By 1850 the parish school was too insignificant an institution, for Scottish education to be called a 'mixed (voluntary plus statutory) system. Although the 1872 Act did not hasten the spread of literacy, it ensured that the rate at which it increased would be maintained.

Taking into account the difficulties of measurement the Scottish working class owed something, if only the ability to read, to the concern in Scotland for knowledge, although it was of the shopkeeper customer variety.¹⁰ Despite the upper class fear of running into an

uncomfortable shortage of manual labour, and the overall fear of seditious books, literacy and therefore education, did penetrate the lowest social depths. It varied only by district, sex, and occupation. In fact by offering opportunities for the employment of children, the industrial revolution raised the opportunity cost of education more in England than in Scotland, and therefore affected negatively the consumption demand for it. The consequence was that in England up until the mid nineteenth century the economy expanded but popular education lagged behind.

As we have shown in the previous chapter, Scotland with the greatest percentage of population in urban areas in 1851, 52%,¹¹ had a high literacy rate even among criminal offenders. Although the area of high literacy was mostly Protestant, the Scottish working class was able to achieve greater literacy because changes or expansion in education anchored themselves on to an already deepseated belief in educational egalitarianism. What is more, a non formal, non structured adult education tradition, reinforced by the narrower class divisions, infused the population with a will to overcome setbacks.

This does not mean that Dr. West's arguments are validated by Scottish experience, and left to itself Scotland would have produced an educated population. Signs were that stagnation in education abounded between 1846 and 1870. The voluntary provision of schools gave most to those that already had an abundance, the majority got the dregs. In response the churches achieved

measurably little, and without state aid to supplement their meagre income from fees, they would have crumbled completely.

Voluntarism's own internal dynamic was the primary source of its failure (namely that this charity was not bottomless) and by the 1860s the system of school organisation was a fetter upon further progress. It was too late then for proud appeals for national identity, as the educational system had failed two decades before. When the year 1872 came around there was a hollowness in the boasting, for the country was living on past credit.

The act of 1872 therefore marked the loss of much of what was distinctively Scottish in the school system, but it halted a further deterioration. Market forces could not sustain an economically adequate system through the imperfect knowledge of customers combined with their own poverty. So the school system was powerless to halt transmitted educational deprivation without compulsion. Perhaps more importantly economic development was to make new creative demands on this workforce. Already the development and diffusion of some technical innovations had increased the investment demand for literacy and numeracy. Before 1850 the transformation of the economy had exposed the weakness of the apprenticeship system. The factory system had originally used compulsory apprentices as a means of obtaining unskilled and semi-skilled labour, but the outlawing of this practise in the early nineteenth century, and the

gradual realisation that education of the right kind removed the need for long apprenticeship, both helped to create support for a more effective system of schooling towards mid century.

By degrees it was plain that education of skilled workers in new industries was inadequate where parents had no financial assistance. Although the influence of economic development upon the Scottish education system was not important until the rise of new technological and scientific industries, and the increased sophistication of traditional industries after 1850, it occurred at a time when market forces hampered the needs of industry, and therefore government intervention became economically essential.

E.M. Forster when explaining his English bill in Parliament echoed the sentiment perfectly;¹²

"Upon the speedy provision of elementary education depends our industrial prosperity. It is no use trying to give technical teaching to our artisans without elementary education; uneducated labourers - many of our labourers are utterly uneducated - are, for the most part, unskilled labourers and if we leave our workfolk any longer unskilled, notwithstanding their strong sinews and determined energy, they will be overmatched in the competition of the world."

There could be no stopping the demands of the captains of industry.

It remains now to answer one more question. What was it in the educational development of the working class that eliminated differences of nationality, and how was education used to harness workers to the needs of the bourgeoisie?

b) Channelling the Bourgeois Potentialities of the Working Class.

No society can persist without its own system of education. To point to the mechanisms of production and exchange alone in order to explain the actual functioning of nineteenth century capitalist society is quite inadequate. The crucial issues for any established society is the successful production of such individuals whose own end do not negate the potentialities of the prevailing system of production. This was the real size of the educational question in Scotland, and 'formal education' in all its manifestations here studied, was but a small segment of it.

Thus in addition to reproducing on an enlarging scale the manifest skills without which productive activity could not be carried on, the complex education system of society was also responsible for producing and reproducing the framework of values, or elaborating the methods of political control, with which the particular individuals defined their own specific aims and ends. Success was guaranteed by individuals internalising outside pressures, adopting the overall perspectives of society as the unquestionable limits of their own aspirations.

In 1776, before our period of study, Adam Smith in Wealth of Nations strongly emphasised that the division of labour was doubly damaging for education. On the one hand it impoverished man to such an extent that society needed a special educational effort to put things right.

In Scotland during our period no such effort was forthcoming, even the half-time system was a dismal failure. Since the division of labour simplified in an extreme form the work process, it largely diminished the need for a proper education instead of intensifying it. Thus in accordance with the needs of the prevailing system of production, the general level of education was not raised but lowered. A process of this sort because it was endemic to productive activity itself, affected the populations of England and Scotland without discrimination. Yet voices still cried out for reform.

During the first fifty years of the nineteenth century some form of moral education was advocated to combat the unwanted social effects of industrialisation, by limiting civil strife or adding to the peace of mind of the workers. Classical economists of J.R. McCulloch's stamp¹³ popularised political economy in order to attain regular habits of frugality in the workforce, but the direct effect of education on labour efficiency through mental improvement gained in significance only after mid century.

Where time spent in productive labour rested so heavily upon the individual worker in his choice of education for his children and himself, early attempts at ameliorative education necessarily languished. Bourgeois ideology could only tackle the problem of education and leisure in a narrowly utilitarian framework, and amusements of the mind destined to restore the

worker's energies for the next day's soulless routine, were supplemented with indirect education through self improvement societies, to keep him away from wasteful debauchery.

Education as a moral necessity leading to an understanding of the universal laws of society which it was to everyone's benefit to obey, was just one of several responses from authority towards social change. There lurked the constant need to indoctrinate against political activity, class conflict, or crime - all believed to be the outcome of ignorance of the best means of pursuing happiness.¹⁴

During the eighteenth century those who provided education did not at any point challenge the assumption about stations, they merely drew different conclusions as to how continuity of a stable heirarchical society was to be best ensured. The protection of property was until the 1790's largely a question of protection against the criminal, against the pauperised and the increasing urban population. When the smoke of the French Revolution died down education had to be discussed significantly in the context of the political protection of property. However, the forms of schooling discussed in this thesis did not produce of themselves any widespread enthusiasm for education among the poor.

The process of speeding up the awakening to education in the early decades of the nineteenth century, must be understood in relation to the overall awakening

of the British working class to their political and social rights, and we must bear in mind constantly that it found its practical expression ultimately not only in the educational work of particular reformers, but in acceptance of educational aims as part of the stock-in-trade of mass movements. The educational thinking of these movements was essentially rationalistic. They held that change could be accepted and controlled in the world of men, that reason was not only the key to all knowledge and understanding it was also the key to human betterment. This implies a belief that education can change men's nature.

Profound as these beliefs were they took generations to permeate. First the working class had to tackle the obscurities of counter propaganda, like pamphlets, tracts, and dialogues and their institutional embodiments in the form of mechanics institutes, lyceums and improvement societies - and later the direct effects of religious education. A major setback arose after 1850 when the politically active working class movement collapsed, and effective opposition to the social system was stabilised, mainly by the authority system of the church and education.

Between 1840 and 1870 the vanguard of labour was moving from opposing to identity with employers, and it took little to bribe the upper layers of the working class into political acquiescence. As we have seen the status conscious skilled workers, divorced from their own class in terms of skill and ambition, took the best that the education system offered. For it was through education

that a stake in the new social order was granted. Over two generations educational conditions for the others, stagnated. There could be little permanent benefit from education due to the pressures of work, poverty, and inherited educational inequalities. Inevitably in this void, the Scottish churches took over as the main agent of social control.

In bureaucratic terms kirk sessions acted as instruments of control through the presbytery to remove nuisances like theatres, Sabbath desecration, drinking, and brothels. In the Presbyterian churches education was seen not as a threat to a well ordered society but as an insurance that the working class would become decent and orderly, thereby gaining the respect of their lawful superiors. To this end teachers were well qualified, and underwent an examination by the presbytery with regard to their aptness to teach. Apart from organisational efficiency all sections of the working class were catered for, and in the case of the evangelical missions the disreputable and criminally tainted had an equal place in its self imposed social system. A substantial section of the emergent working class found themselves confronted by a web of institutions seeking to impose values and norms having little relevance to former experience and life style. This caused them to lapse into spiritual destitution, or seek an identity with some small peripheral group. Here the Scottish Sabbath School offered the educational link that faithfully nurtured a belief in church connection.

Likewise the prevalence of bourgeois ideology within the ranks of the elite sections of the working class was linked not only to the all pervasiveness of the Presbyterian ideal itself, but to the fact that for these sections the ideal had an apparent relevance. The industrial schools prisons, ragged schools, and reformatories insulated the more fortunate in this class from their less respectable rump, at the same time as they morally disciplined inmates to conform to the teachings of an unquestionable religious belief.

As there was a powerful propensity on the part of the middle class to impose a normative pattern of behaviour on the new labour force, the imposition was assisted by the quasi-legal and bureaucratic functions carried out by the churches. The successful imposition was furthered by the lack of any developed countervailing ideology on the part of the workers (except minority acceptance of socialism), whose leaders tended to look upwards for their ideology, and downwards for their social support.

In spite of this channelling of the worker's bourgeois potentialities through education, the religious culture and educational state of the Scottish working class was far from even. Having little of the necessary knowledge to make for themselves any judgement about the quality of schooling offered, the minds of worker's children became crammed with dogma and theological principles they could hardly understand. Narrow

sectarianism awakened in children, led to the neglect of instruction in religion and morals, and a clear idea of everyday conduct based upon moral principles was absent. In this respect the ruling class did not even take the trouble to instruct workers in its own moral code, consequently the working class was shielded by its own defective education from the judgements of religion (as they did not worry about things of which they were ignorant).

When in the late 1860s compulsory elementary education was seriously considered, the aristocracy of labour was ready and willing to move in the direction of some reform. Already a superstructure of Scottish schools for the educationally separate class groupings was in the process of consolidation and needed little refinement. There again, because religion had not anaesthetized completely the working class, religion could co-exist happily with the demand for secular and technical education, and fortunately the literacy level of the Scottish worker was already impressively high.

Any local absence or abundance of educational provision before 1872 merely reflected the state of the political confrontation over the distribution of educational benefits. It was not as Dr. West suggests a normal state of affairs. It was the prelude to the resolution of capitalist educational disorder on a higher plane, with the old contestants of church, state, and reformers, well and truly played out.